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# Superior General's Report 1992

The Spiritan Congregation

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# CONGREGATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



## SUPERIOR GENERAL'S REPORT

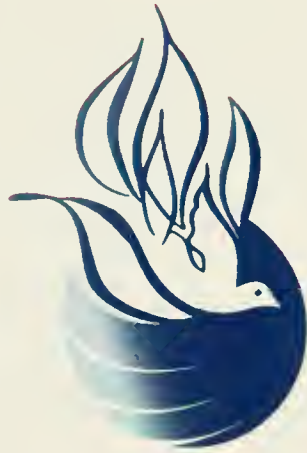
XVII GENERAL CHAPTER

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*Congregation of the Holy Spirit*  
*USA Eastern Province*

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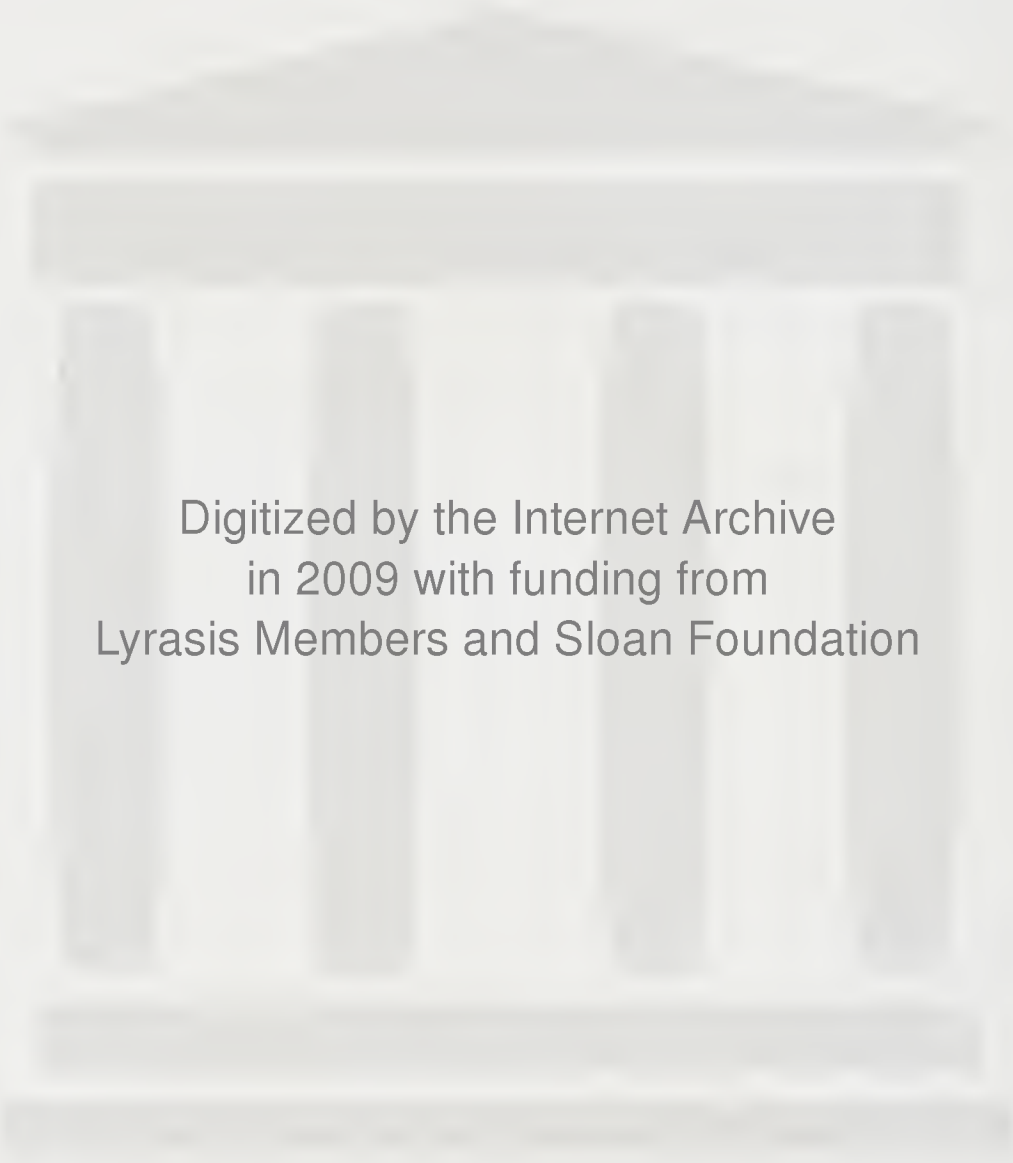
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## INTRODUCTION

Dear Confreres, Delegates to the General Chapter,

This Report of the Superior General to the 17th General Chapter of the Congregation reaches you several weeks before the opening of the Chapter. It is the first time that such a Report has been sent out in advance, making it possible for you to become familiar with the life and animation of the Congregation before you come to the Chapter at Itaci in Brazil.

Since this document bears the title Report of the Superior General, I accept responsibility for it. The General Council as a unit has however participated in drawing it up. Each Assistant, in function of his responsibilities within the Council and of his familiarity with the Congregation through visits or his correspondence, has contributed his part. In this we have kept faith with the method of working we have been using right through our six years. We have, as a team, gone over all the different contributions so as to arrive finally at this finished version.

I want to express my gratitude to the Council for this active involvement, which has enabled us as our time in office draws to a close, to survey once more the life of the entire Congregation in six continents, its vitality and its hopes but also its problems and its difficulties. The part you are going to play will be to evaluate what has been achieved in these recent years and to lay down guidelines for living and for action in the years that are coming.

In the first part of this Report we will be discussing some situations in the world and in the modern Church that challenge our mission. The Spirit is sending us to this Church and to this world as bringers of the Good News. In the second part we will present for you the different circumscriptions of our Congregation, each one of which is trying to respond in its own way, to determine the crucial issues of Mission today, in the different situations of the world and the local Church. We will be presenting to you some underlying trends in the living reality of our institute, the ones that are particularly marked, but also some questioning. This will be the third section of our report. Lastly, in the fourth part we will be giving you a more detailed account of our way of animation and of the mandates which we received from the last General Chapter.



# FIRST PART

## THE CHURCH AND THE CONGREGATION IN THE WORLD OF TODAY

### CHAPTER I

#### THE WORLD ABOUT US

##### 1:0 INTRODUCTION

"The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the followers of Christ" (GS. 1). By beginning with these words from The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the modern world, the Council was inviting us to see ourselves as really and intimately in solidarity with the human race and with our history. From now on we can no longer think of mission without taking the time to look about at the world and without seeking to understand its deepest questioning.

On the same lines our Rule of Life asks us to learn to "... analyze situations ..." (SRL. 14) and to accept human experience in all its depth (see SRL. 16.2). That is why this report seeks to describe in the first place, salient features - among others - of the world where we are living our mission - aspects that challenge both mission and evangelisation.

As Christians and as missionaries we have an optimistic and benevolent outlook upon the world. We look upon it as having been saved by Christ. Nonetheless, with Pope John Paul II in his Encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* of December 1987 (numbers 11 to 13), we find that a certain optimism - with regard to hopes for development and reducing the divide between the North and the South - that was still in evidence in *Populorum progressio* (1967) following the Second Vatican Council, has been toned down by the reality of the world as it is today. Some of the hopes of twenty years ago have not been realized.

## 1:1 THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

### 1:1.1 The world of communications

A new world is evolving, a world of satellites, space shuttles, computers, micro processors, all of which make information and communication instantaneous. Men are more closely in contact, there are new ways of communicating, new communication networks. We have become eye-witnesses to what is happening in Southern Africa, in Croatia, in Albania, at Belfast, in Sri Lanka ... We get to know immediately about a civil war, a famine, an earthquake ...

The man who controls, the person who has access to these communications, wields a power that can be used for good (the saving of human life for example) or for evil (during the Gulf War, information - or disinformation - was valued as a weapon worth every bit as much as tactical armaments).

What we are getting close to is a type of global culture, a world-wide way of behaving, a sort of reduction to unity (still admittedly relative), groups of people who are citizens of the world.

### 1:1.2 A world where boundaries break

The circulation of information along these new channels is playing an important role in the great upheavals taking place all over the world:

- in Eastern Europe, the movement begun by Lithuania, and which the media broadcast, brought about the overthrow of the old Soviet Union, an overthrow with consequences we have not yet measured. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which came from the wreckage of the USSR, gives us reasons to expect to see different alliances. Even if, unfortunately, new ideological and geographic barriers are being put in place, from now on no country can consider itself an island;
- in Africa democratisation of regimes which were single party states, the setting up of multi-partyism and the calling into being of national conferences is spreading like an oil slick from country to country. Regimes which are clinging on to a single party system are taking a stand that is against the train of developments in history. Even if - once again in our day at the price of a bloodbath - they hold out, they will not for long resist internal pressures ...

Until recently the world has been under the sway of power-blocs, principally the East and the West. Each possessed its zones of influence in the South, sometimes holding a country hostage (cf. Angola). What remains of the old USSR no longer has the military or economic power to play a role on the international chess board. In its own eyes The United States is the defender of the world order. Does it have the financial ability and (after the war in the Gulf) the international credit, to be able to act as such? The countries of the Pacific Rim are experiencing a period of extraordinary growth. What we are looking at there is the emergence of a multi-polar world. Things being as they are, there simply does not exist a supra-national and worldscale political power.

"There are certain political, economic or financial regulations that can hold sway in the UNO, in the EC, in the now defunct COMICON, in the different groupings drawn up by the International Monetary Fund, The World Bank or by the summits of the seven rich countries, the G7; in all of this the countries of the South have hardly any place. For them, there remains OPEC or the Summit of Non-aligned States or now the very recent Summit of Heads of State and Governments of the Third World, which brings fifteen countries together ... Perhaps now the day of the UN has finally dawned." (Gabriel Marc, president of the CCFD, *Comité Catholique Contre la Faim et Pour le Développement*).

### 1:1.3 Safeguarding the universe: a world-scale problem

More than at any time in the past, mankind is growing aware, as it looks to-day at the solidarity binding it together, that certain problems cannot be resolved save on a global level. One of these is the safeguard of the integrity of the universe.

For this awareness, mankind has paid the price of ever more numerous and murderous catastrophies. The tragedy of a Bhopal or a Seveso or a Chernobyl demonstrates that there is no country may look upon itself as sheltered from ecological catastrophe, even if it has no part directly in causing it. Ecological preoccupations nowadays have a dimension that extends to the whole globe:

- to-day population growth and poverty are making nations extend cultivation to more and more land and upset the balance of nature. The pressure from man and beast together brings deforestation, compaction of the soil leads to leaching, to climatic changes and diminished rainfall;



- some observations indicate that the atmosphere is slowly heating up, due to the gases, particularly carbon dioxide, that industries emit. Long-lasting chlorofluorocarbons (CFO) are building up at the poles and are destroying the fragile ozone layer. In Australia many skin cancers are already being attributed to this phenomenon;
- there is a proliferation of industrial wastes. Some are radio-active and long-lasting; some are dumped at sea - there we can see a sleeping time-bomb for future generations; some are clandestinely buried in countries of the South, with bribes changing hands;
- species of living things are wiped out unendingly by human activity, impoverishing genetic reserves.

At Paris in July 1989 a summit of the seven wealthiest countries - the G7 - for the first time issued a declaration on the topic of the safeguard of the atmosphere, underlining the urgency of getting this question sorted out before the future of mankind is compromised.

From the 1st to the 12th June 1992, a few weeks before our Chapter, there will be a World Conference on the Environment and Development organised by the United Nations, at Rio de Janeiro. Unlike the previous World Conference on this theme (which was held at Stockholm in 1972 and which, to its credit, gave ecological problems an airing at the international level), the meeting in Rio de Janeiro had as its objective to agree practicable steps for the protection and safeguard of the environment. The various governments are to be obliged to conform to these decisions.

## **1:2 WORLD POPULATION**

At the end of this millennium and the dawn of the third, in the field of population, the world is going through huge changes. One may speak of unprecedented upheavals.

### **1:2.1 Population increase**

The first fact that stands out is the worldwide increase in the number of human beings. Compared with forty years ago, world population has doubled, passing from 2.5 thousand million to 5.2. By the beginning of the third millennium of the Christian era, population will have grown by one thousand million.

About the year 2025 world population is going to be 8,200,000,000. These figures do not take into account certain factors which will cut down these trends, such as drought, natural calamities and diseases such as malaria and Aids. None the less these factors, while they slow the rise, do not bring

about a downturn. Should an effective barrier to the spread of the Aids virus not be discovered, the prediction is that from now to the end of the twentieth century, something like fifty million people are going to die from this disease. Fifty million of a population that should have been attaining 6,200 million.

**1:2.2 The uneven spread of these population increases**

The second observation brings out the uneven distribution of this increase in the world's population. Looking at the total population of the industrialized countries and that of the countries which are moving towards industrialization, we arrive at the following figures:

Year	Industrial Countries	Other
1989	1,206,000,000	4,028,000,000
2000	1,268,000,000	5,059,000,000
2020-2025	1,339,900,000	6,991,000,000

(Population sheet 1989)

If we take as one example Europe and Africa, it is a simple matter to show how uneven is the distribution of this growth in population. In order to have figures that are relatively level at the starting point, we take Africa as being Africa south of the Sahara, excluding South Africa, and by Europe we mean the twelve countries of the European Community plus Switzerland, Austria and the Scandinavian countries.

- 1985: Africa had 391 million inhabitants  
Europe had 379 million inhabitants
- 2020: Africa will have 637 million inhabitants  
Europe will have 392 million inhabitants
- 2025: Africa will have 1,257 million inhabitants  
Europe will have 396 million inhabitants.

**1:2.3 Consequences for the population of Christians**

The third observation with regard to these developments in population is the effect upon the Christian population of the world. Down to recent decades the heartland of the Church was Europe and North America. The figures are going to shift that center towards what had been the outer reaches. In 1980 Catholics belonging to the southern hemisphere made up 56% of the total. In 1987 they represented 60%. In the years 2000-2010 they are going to be almost 70% of all Catholics.



## 1:2.4 Urbanisation

A fourth observation concerns the phenomenon of urbanization, which is having an equal impact on both the northern and the southern hemisphere, with this however for difference: in the North it happened following industrialization, it is happening in the South before an industrialized society is in place.

Figures issued by the United Nations mention that the urban population in the world doubled between 1959-1985, rising from 1,000,000,000 and that it is going to increase further by 1,000,000,000 before the end of this decade. At that date almost three quarters of the population of industrialized countries will be living in urban zones. In other countries the figure will be 40%. Towards the year 2025, 78% of the population of industrialized countries will be in urban zones, in other countries, 57%.

These developments - which are not and cannot be planned - are rapidly going to create megalopolises where 20 or 30 million people live. The planet is not urbanizing anymore, it is becoming megalopolised. Fifteen cities of the world have passed the symbolic point of ten million inhabitants. A hundred towns have passed 2.5 million. "In Latin America in the years 1950 only 6 conglomerations had more than a million inhabitants... At the end of the 1980s we may estimate that there are scattered about the subcontinent about 30 metropolises that have one million inhabitants". (According to the authors of *La Géographie Universelle. Tome 3, Latin America*).

"Africa does not (yet) have urban monsters, but over the same period its towns have exploded; the population of Lagos has been multiplied by 30, that of Abidjan by 35. Nairobi has been ripping along at more than 15% per year in the 1980s. When we remember that with an annual growth rate of 10% a town's population doubles every 7 years, these statistics are mindboggling." (*La Croix*, 18 October 1991).

The most populous cities of the world  
(inhabitants in millions)

	1975		1985		Project 2010	
1	New York	19.7	Tokyo	21.8	Mexico	32.1
2	Tokyo	17.7	Mexico	18.4	Shanghai	31.0
3	Shanghai	12.4	New York	18.3	Peking (Beijing)	27.3
4	Mexico	11.9	Shanghai	17.5	Sao Paulo	24.9
5	Los Angeles	10.8	Sao Paulo	15.0	Tokyo	23.0
6	Sao Paulo	10.7	Peking (Beijing)	14.6	Bombay	21.0
7	London	10.3	Los Angeles	10.9	Calcutta	20.5
8	Peking	9.3	Buenos Aires	10.8	New York	19.9
9	Rhine-Ruhr	9.3	Rio de Janeiro	10.4	Djakarta	18.3
10	Buenos Aires	9.3	Seoul	10.2	Rio de Janeiro	16.5
11	Paris	9.2	Calcutta	10.1	Madras	15.9
12	Rio de Janeiro	8.9	Paris	10.1	Cairo	15.9
13	Osaka	8.7	Osaka	10.1	Dacca	15.3
14	Chicago	8.1	Bombay	10.1	Karachi	15.2
15	Calcutta	7.8	London	9.8	Séoul	14.8
16	Moscow	7.4	Rhine-Ruhr	9.1	Delhi	14.5
17	Bombay	7.0	Moscow	8.7	Bangkok	13.9
18	Seoul	6.8	Djakarta	8.6	Teheran	13.7
19	Cairo	6.3	Cairo	8.5	Bagdad	13.5
20	Milan	6.2	Chicago	7.4	Manila	13.0
21	Djakarta	5.7	Milan	7.1	Istanbul	12.5
22	Philadelphia	4.8	Madras	7.0	Buenos Aires	12.5
23	Detroit	4.8	Téhéran	6.7	Los Angeles	12.5
24	Téhéran	4.5	Delhi	6.6	Lagos	12.1
25	Delhi	4.1	Istanbul	6.6	Kinshasa	11.5

### 1:2.5 Population movements

A fifth observation - the migration of people from the South towards the North. "Today two or three percent of all human beings live in a country that is not their own. Whatever policies for the protection of frontiers there may be, this figure is inescapably going to go on increasing under the pressure of the twice-as-bad statistics of poverty. In the long run xenophobic and protectionist attitudes are unsustainable. It would be wiser by far to avoid painful clashes by preparing to welcome in these people, rather than to comfort one's self with the delusion of being able to construct a supposedly impregnable fortress" (Gabriel Marc).

The film, *The March*, has pictured dramatically the rising of an immense mob of refugees from the South towards the North. What was presented as a scenario of imagined horror is the reality already. If the North is not willing to share part of its wealth to resolve the present disequilibrium, the old East/West confrontation will shortly be replaced by a confrontation

between the North and the South. The armies of the rich countries will, as in the film, be posted at the frontiers to attempt to stop immigrants from the poor countries from entering.

For the North to welcome in people who are fleeing situations of poverty and unemployment, persecution and oppression is only a palliative. The real answer is to be sought in remedying the imbalance between the North and South.

## 1:3 THE NORTH-SOUTH DIVIDE

### 1:3.1 A complex reality

**We must be careful to avoid a simplistic view** when we use the words North and South. A North which includes Japan, the United States, Canada and Europe, is across from a South, an immense Third World which encompasses Latin America, Africa and Asia. Such a clearcut view of the reality has already been overtaken by events.

The countries of the South do not all slip into categories defined by poverty and underdevelopment. Several among them are economic powers on the world scale, for example Brazil (8th on the world rankings) but also Korea and Indonesia which stand out sharply from their neighbours. In these countries economic development has attained advanced levels in certain fields. The industries of some other countries are very competitive; Colombia, the Philippines, Nigeria...

In the case of the North there has been the rapid rise of "new poor". The countries of Eastern Europe are facing misery.

Overall however, to picture a North different from and opposed to the South remains true, which is why we use it, with the restrictions that we have mentioned.

### 1:3.2 A increasing imbalance

During the last 30 years **the gap between the poor countries of the South and the rich countries of the North** has widened dramatically. Today the twenty percent of world population that lives in the North is enjoying 80% of world GDP and the 80% living in the South, 20%. This imbalance is without any doubt going to get worse, except for a few countries in the North and South, to a point where it will create unsustainable tensions that will put world stability at risk.

This North-South imbalance is further increased by **the recent convulsions in the states of Eastern Europe**. Ideological and military confrontation of the East and the West has in a few months gone from antagonism to cooperation. This cooperation, in itself an excellent thing, risks damaging cooperation between the North and the South.

North-South disparity is going to become even more sharp because of scientific and **technological inventions**. In these fields the southern hemisphere finds itself on the margins because its budgets for research and development are only 6% of entire world budget, and the South also experiences a brain-drain towards the wealthier countries of the North. The great majority of the countries of the South are producers of primary materials and fossil fuels. To an ever greater degree, scientific and technological systems are going to employ substitute products for these primary materials and fossil fuels (optic fibre, nuclear energy, new synthetic materials). However we may note that such a disparity need not be irreversible. Countries newly equipped with leading-edge technologies sometimes are more competitive than older countries handicapped by the weight of out-of-date infrastructure.

One of the most basic **disparities is in education**. Here originate other inequalities in power and in wealth. In a general way, individuals who have had a better education are the leaders in their society, all the others are condemned to remain inferiors. Inequalities in education do separate the North from the South but they exist also within rich countries. In fact because they never succeed in defining their purpose (the development of the individual? The training of responsible citizens? "Learning how to learn" or "stocking up on facts"? Train and educate an elite or raise everybody up together?), educational systems are in crisis almost everywhere. Whatever about that, in the South the cost of education is beyond the means that are available.

**In the field of communications**, a sort of nervous system of the global village, financial considerations prevail over cultural ones. The financial implications are so heavy that what we are watching is the evolution of worldwide multi-media groups, wielding enormous financial power. They put out via satellite serialised programmes that gradually swamp the different nations. States are powerless to stem this cultural invasion, detrimental to national cultural differences, neither can they respond to the new demands which are created by these programmes which seem to impose a style of life and a new values' system. We can appreciate how greatly the countries of the South, with their tiny financial means, stand in fear of an audio-visual "colonisation". Gustave Gutierrez remarked "you would think the people of Peru were mostly white if you judged by the television programmes".



### 1.3.3 The problem of debt

Before all else, however, it is the **problem of world debt** that underlines the difference between North and South. World debt results from the attempt to develop Latin America, Asia and Africa by means of a strategy that reproduced the North American and European model. The objective of the industrialised countries was to boost the economic growth of those countries through credits extended by banks. They hoped in this way to mop up poverty, unemployment and the technology gap.

Economic growth did not in fact result. Developing countries are no longer able to pay what they owe. There are multiple reasons: part of the credits never were invested (because of authorities that are corrupt the monies found their way back into foreign bank accounts); part was wasted on imports that produced nothing, on armaments, on luxury goods. What part was invested did not yield the expected results - sometimes being put into schemes that were over-ambitious.

If they were to pay the interest on this debt, these countries would be obliged to

- on the one hand, export more and more primary products, which lowers the price, to the point where the rates of exchange suffer; falling prices are catastrophic for such countries - it takes more and more of the primary product to be able to pay for consumer goods. Increased agricultural production for export sometimes is the cause of deforestation over large extents of land.
- and on the other hand, in order to cut down internal government spending (a measure that is sometimes abruptly imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank) and balance their budget, many countries reduce spending on education, training and public health.

**Total or partial debt remission** seems for many countries a question of life or death. "Africa's debt is at present one of the principal causes of the scarcity of foodstuffs there. As long as this debt is not reduced hunger is going to grow worse in Africa" (Susan George, a specialist in development, the author of a book called *"Jusqu'au cou, enquête sur la dette du Tiers Monde"*).

There are those who consider that debt remission pure and simple, is not always desirable because it can lead to an increase in prestige spending and signals approval of some governments and their unjust financial policies.

Others are thinking along the lines of **creative debt relief**. Creditor nations would reduce the indebtedness of the debtors, who, in counterpart and in their own currency, then free up equivalent sums. The fund that this yields would then serve to finance local development projects on two

conditions: that this would be run by organizations that are independent of the state and that this would serve projects in the fields of health, education and training, as well as self-sufficiency in foodstuffs ...

This intractable problem of debt should in fact, some say, be taken together with a more fundamental question. If we took into account the real cost of the historic and present debt of the North to the South (added value for slavery, contribution to the war efforts in Europe, damages for colonialism, present underpayment for primary materials, etc ...), would the South then really be the debtor ...?

## **1:4 DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORLD TO-DAY**

### **1:4.1 The new poor in industrialized countries**

Zones of poverty are reappearing and spreading within industrialized countries. The acclaimed trickle down theory (an economic theory according to which the overall wealth of a country in the end reaches even the poorest) has shown itself to be ineffective. The wealthiest in fact take to themselves what is increased output and the poor are shut out. The gap between rich and poor grows wider in The United States, in Great Britain, in France and in other European countries. These countries not only have not overcome poverty but they have made laws which are sometimes in themselves cause of worsened deprivation. Switzerland does not recognise the rights of seasonal workers. So in the industrialised countries of Asia, in South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore the standard of living of the poor has not risen at the same time as the gross national product.

The reasons for this exclusion lies in the structural and economic order but also in the cultural. There is a portion of the population for example, that no longer understands these new codes and signals, or is unable to make use of today's tools, modern technology, the languages and the hardware of the computer. "The rich countries of Europe and America seem to be resigning themselves quite quickly to becoming societies which forge ahead at different speeds. Yet in this resides the cause of the strains in society and the breakdown of law and order which is threatening the peace of society".

### **1:4.2 Discrimination against children and young people**

The discrimination which falls upon the poorest children is particularly harrowing. Cardinal Arns of Sao Paulo in a recent conference in Rome at the *Centro per l'Unità* gave figures for child murders in Brazil that are

startling, murder carried out by police officers employed by commercial companies in order to put an end to the pilfering committed by the abandoned children. In New York, Sr Helène O'Sullivan, M.M., well known in Rome for her five years working in SEDOS (Center for Documentation and Research in Rome which brings together more than 17 missionary institutes and where William Jenkinson, C.S.Sp, is now director), worked at New York in the setting up of an office to publicise and to deter travel agencies which by sending American tourists are increasing child prostitution in Asia.

In Africa up to the present the extended family has been a safeguard and a protection for childhood. This situation is changing in the huge African towns where unnumbered young people are left to fend for themselves.

On the occasion of a summit devoted to children in the world the United Nations published a World Declaration on the survival, protection and development of children (30th September 1990). Pope John Paul II through his representative Cardinal Casaroli, sent a message on the theme "The children of the world are crying out for love".

The Catholic International Bureau for children at Geneva and some specialized magazines, for example "Child Workers in Asia" (published in Bangkok) provide regular information on the abuse of children (inhuman working conditions, maltreatment, the kidnapping of children for prostitution...).

### **1:4.3 Discrimination against migrants and refugees**

From the 30th September to the 5th October 1991, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral care of Migrants and Itinerants organized a world congress in Rome, which drew up the following facts.

The totals of migrants and refugees still grows to some extent all over the world. Exact figures are difficult to give, 50 million migrants and 20 million refugees are mentioned.

Africa is the continent with the greatest number of refugees. The estimate is that 50% of all refugees and displaced persons are in Africa. Internal conflicts in Liberia, Chad, Sudan and Somalia, frontier disputes between Senegal and Mauritania could in the next few years cause waves of refugees in Africa.

Migrants from the southern hemisphere who are living in other countries of the South are in a different situation from those migrants who are in the northern hemisphere. The situation is different also as it affects the refugee and the migrant, but whatever be these differences, the Pontifical



Council's meeting brought out how much discrimination is undergone by migrants and refugees everywhere. There are many reasons for this; their origin, their not knowing the language of the country where they are living, their unfamiliarity with their entitlements under the law, the discriminatory legislation of many states, the precarious sort of jobs they do, their religion, the way their culture and their identity are looked down upon ...

#### 1:4.4 Discrimination against women

Despite the enormous progress in recent decades towards abolishing various and age-old discrimination against women, equality between men and women remains a live issue. In most countries legislation recognises equality in principle between the rights of men and those of women. The principle guarantees both to men and to women the same access to training and education, and the right to freedom of choice in their lives, the same freedom to choose their career, marriage, domicile and religious belief. But numerous injustices exist in society. Despite recognition of equality of rights, the fact remains that in most countries there is no assurance of equal pay for equal work by men and women, there is discrimination in the different professions blocking promotion through the ranks.

In certain cases religion is fostering this inequality.

It is customary to recall, with regard to Islam, that women are reduced to playing a secondary role in society and that they are not accorded certain fundamental rights - access to schooling, a choice of profession, free choice of the marriage partner, religion, custody of the children in case of divorce.

At the same time it must be recognised that discrimination of a similar nature, although much more hidden, has its roots in so-called Christian cultures through those myths, the myth of the mother-figure or of woman-in-the-home, when these lock women into a single role.

It has often been the Church that mothered these myths or has upheld them. These rights often are struggling to find breathing-space, even if the Second Vatican Council (*Gaudium et Spes* 29) affirmed "the basic equality of all" (men and women) and asked that "... with respect to the fundamental rights of the person, every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural ... is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent"(*GS* 29).

Since the Council relatively little effort to achieve this would seem to have been made, as witness a certain number of interventions at the last Synod of the Laity. "Why is there this evident contrast between woman's place in society and her place in the Church?" As a Canadian bishop

remarked "they keep the house, so to speak, but it is the men who run it". An American bishop said that for him the precise "role of women in the Church and in society is perhaps the most significant challenge that we as disciples of Christ are facing to-day".

Would not the moral doctrine of the Church be better contextualized and accepted if woman were to a greater extent associated with the thinking on these subjects which concern them more directly - for example, the painful problems of the hard cases in the matter of abortion ?

## **1:5 THE PLANE OF RELIGION IN THE MODERN WORLD**

### **1:5.1 Religion still a influential factor**

Not long since, totalitarian regimes were dismissive of religion, calling it the opium of the people. Proponents of the secularised society confidently predicted the death of God. No one is talking like that to-day. Only a superficial glance could fail to recognise the significance that religion continues to have in the affairs of men and women to-day. Even the West, which happily calls itself secular or pluralist with regard to religion, is searching for a religious significance in the various disorienting changes it is passing through.

The Communist Bloc first suffered cracks in Poland thanks in large measure to a Church that built its unity on resisting communism and to a Polish Pope. In Eastern Europe the fall of the Communist system cannot simply be put down to economic collapse nor to the corrupt politics in the different regimes but has to be credited to the tenacity of believing Christians, Jews and Muslims. Unfortunately the newly re-acquired religious liberty has brought old antagonisms to the surface again, as what has been going on in the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union shows.

The Pope's trips to different churches throughout the world continue to make headlines. Unfortunately scandals which reflect badly upon Church figures, scandals blown up by the media, and differences that exist between some theologians and Roman Congregations always attract the interest of the press.

Before the Gulf War, Saddam Hussein was shown praying on his mat that God would come to his aid, and a grave-looking George Bush accepting the spiritual support of his adviser the Reverend Billy Graham.

Many Western countries, because of growing immigration, are feeling pressure from Islamic communities for better recognition of their proper rights as Believers.

This influence of religious belief is increasing with the growth of population (which was emphasized above) without the percentages of the different religions being greatly altered. Precise statistics are hard to come by, but it would seem that Catholics represent 18-19% of the world population, Muslims 17-18%. (According to certain estimates the number of these latter will overtake that of Catholics in the course of the next decade). Other Christians are said to be 16%. Hinduism is in fourth place. It should be noted that 15% or 16% of the world's population say that they do not belong to any religious affiliation.

### 1:5.2 Religion: a force for freedom or obscurantism

These two aspects are found in the religious landscape throughout the world. If we were to look at Salman Rushdie's condemnation to death for having written "*The Satanic Verses*": if we look at the way religions claim political power, if we look at how they impose laws which run counter to the modern pluralistic conscience (for example, every sort of radical movement and *sharia*): if we take into account divisions, struggles, wars which have religion as a background, religion begins to look like the wreckage of a past whose significance history is going to sweep away.

But, if we consider for example the Church in Latin America, which emphasises Sacred Scripture as a force for liberation and Christ - not just as a man of mercy, but also as a man of justice; if we consider the prophetic preferential option for and solidarity with the poor that was made at Medellin in 1968 and reaffirmed at Puebla in 1979, then religion looks to be a force for liberation. In the same way religions - be they Christian, Jewish or Muslim have appeared as a force for liberation in Eastern Europe.

### 1:5.3 Religion and secularization

Secularization may be thought of as the gradually to be attained objective of the religious, mythic, (and finally pagan) recognition of society. It is not to be confused with secularism which is inspired by atheism and begins from the principle that the world can do without a God who has become superfluous and an encumbrance. Secularization rather is the search for a scientific and methodic explanation of the universe. It does not deny the existence of God. It is the "effort in no way incompatible with faith or religion, to discover in creation, in each thing or each happening in the universe, the laws which regulate them with a certain autonomy.." (*Evangelii nuntiandi*. 55). The Judeo-Christian origin of secularization has also been talked about.

In tandem with secularization there is often the privatization of belief and of practice, pluralism in religious and moral behaviour, the questioning of religious institutions and authority, a falling off in the impact of religious people in the public sector and the diminished influence of the Churches upon decision-making in civil life.

Secularization asks us to look in a different way at the action of God in the universe and in the history of mankind. It is capable of helping us discover more and more the depth of His presence in the heart of reality.

#### **1:5.4 Evangelical religious movements**

Throughout the last twenty years a phenomenon that has never stopped growing is the emergence of new religious communities, often roughly classified together under the pejorative name "sects". (There exist also numerous sects that have no Christian reference: Rosicrucians, sects of Eastern origin...).

These movements have general shared characteristics:

- belonging to a community results from a radical experience of conversion;
- these movements impose upon those who adhere to them unconditional obedience to the leaders and rather strict moral principles;
- generally these movements look critically upon dominant churches and upon the economic and social structure of society;
- community life inside these movements is very intense and gives a support such as society and the churches do not give;
- Sacred Scripture, interpreted literally and in a fundamentalist style, gives many of them the basis of their belief.

Many of these movements have a missionary drive that brings them to different parts of the world: to Africa, to Oceania, to Asia, just as well as Europe and America. Even though it may be difficult to have exact figures, there is no doubt whatsoever that these movements count many followers in the Catholic Church, and that to the point where in May 1986 the Vatican brought out a study of the problem, the "phenomenon of sects and new religious movements: a pastoral challenge".

#### **1:5.5 Interest in things spiritual**

This interest in a transcendent dimension to human life is not found in the sects alone, it is found in the different world situations: in



industrialised countries as in those which are not yet industrialised. It would seem that the faster change moves in the world, the more men are looking for a meaning to their life:

- this is true of traditional religions which in many places are at the moment experiencing a rebirth. This renewal can be the occasion for dialogue with Christianity in a common search for the truth. It can just as easily go astray as has happened in certain places, turning into a resurgence of practices like witchcraft and ritual murder (cf. the pastoral letter of Mgr. Anatole Milandou, bishop of Kinkala of the Congo, Lent 1990);
- this is true also in the Western world. So, in Northern America which is looked upon as being the very temple of materialism, 57% of Americans, according to a recent enquiry are praying daily and 78% once per week. Even the professed atheist falls back upon prayer, as is seen in moments of stress. There are, as the saying goes, no atheists in foxholes.

Unfortunately this openness towards the transcendent, which could be a lever towards a authentic meeting with God, often stops at superstitious practices, in divination, in astrology or it takes refuge in the irrational.

The quest for a more complete meaning to human existence, for some transcendent quality, for a "better-being" can create an opportunity for religion and for the Christian faith. They come however bearing obstacles with them, such as a reticence to make the commitment to transform one's life that is hardly compatible with the Gospel messages. Liberation theology in Latin America with its demands of "orthopraxis" of the Christian belief has led a section of the people to look for experiences that are more "religious", in fact more cut off from reality.

Political forces which are seeking to defend oppressive systems willingly draw support from such religious movements, even finance them, the same as they lean for support on established churches once they have refused to listen to the cry of the poor.



## CHAPTER 2

### THE CHURCH AND OUR MISSION

#### INTRODUCTION

These crucial happenings in our world, as we have just been describing it, constitute challenges to evangelization and so they are our affair as missionaries in quite a particular sense. That is the first point of this Chapter II. Then too, the Church has got to respond to the same challenges in its own living reality if it is to improve its response to being the Sign of the Kingdom in the world: unity in its diversity, the participation of the laity, the dwindling number of priests. This is the world and the ecclesial context within which our mission lives.

#### 1:6 CHURCH AND CONGREGATION CHALLENGED BY THE MODERN WORLD

##### 1:6.1 The challenge from world population

- There are many sectors of humanity which because of **population growth**, have not heard the Good News of the Gospel. *Redemptoris Missio*, dealing with such geographic areas, tells us that "missionary activity is only beginning..." (RM 30). The encyclical goes on "The growth in the number of new Churches in recent times should not deceive us. Within the territories entrusted to these Churches - particularly in Asia, but also in Africa, Latin America and Oceania - there remain vast regions still to be evangelised..." (RM 37). This encyclical indicates a priority, the continent of Asia, towards which "*missio ad gentes*" (RM 37) should direct its efforts. Except for what we are doing in Pakistan, we the Spiritans are not present in this vast continent. How should we take up this challenge? (cf. 2.11.2);
- the **urban explosion** too is a new challenge to the Church because it radically alters apostolic and missionary work. The encyclical *Redemptoris missio* tells us:

"In the modern age, missionary activity has been carried out especially in isolated regions which are far from centres of civilization and which are hard to penetrate because of difficulties of communication, language or climate. Today the image of *missio ad gentes* is perhaps changing: efforts should be concentrated on the big cities where new customs and styles of living arise,



together with new forms of culture and communication, which then influence the wider population. It is true that the "option for the neediest" means that we should not overlook the most abandoned and isolated human groups, but it is also true that individuals or small groups cannot be evangelised if we neglect the centres where a new humanity, so to speak, is emerging, and where new models of development are taking shape. The future of the younger nations is being shaped in the cities" (*RM 37b*).

These realities rightly put us to the question regarding one aspect of how we do our missionary work. A certain number of confreres insist upon the importance of presence in rural societies, a type of mission that is hard both as an apostolate and as a way to have to live. In such places, the people are often neglected by the government and by officials. The role that our confreres fill there supplies what is lacking and serves to prick consciences. At the same time there can be a danger in it for us - the risk of getting locked into this one speciality and losing our place in the mainstream.

Others of our men, particularly younger confreres, see - as *Redemptoris missio* says - that "efforts should be concentrated on the big cities" (*RM 37b*). The ever increasing populations of the cities and the way the Church is missing there, where the future is coming to pass, are a challenge that cries out to our young men. These two forms of mission, the urban and the rural, are in fact complementary, not mutually exclusive, and hold each other in a creative tension. They take for granted also that we must give careful thought to the ways in which we model our evangelization. Are we looking for the conversion of individuals or are we seeking to influence a whole sector or a whole milieu?

## 1:6.2 Challenges from the North-South divide

Some theologians see in this division into a North and a South one of the principal challenges to evangelization today, with the North becoming the principal object of mission, because it bears the greatest responsibility for the divide.

Father Amaladoss writes along these lines. "We cannot ignore the sufferings and the needs of the poor. We need to do what we can to alleviate them. But to promote justice in the world effectively we have to fight against the causes rather than concern ourselves only with the effects. These causes are not merely economic and political, but also, and much more, moral and spiritual... I am not making a simplistic assertion that the missionfield today is the First World. ... There is a moral and spiritual crisis that needs the challenge of the gospel. This crisis seems particularly evident in the First

World so that mission there seems an urgency and a priority" (Amaladoss Michael, S.J., Trends in Mission, SEDOS/Orbis, 1991 p. 395).

We should not allow a restrictive interpretation of Father Amaladoss' guidelines to redirect our mission towards the North to the detriment of the South. All that being said, *Redemptoris missio* considers that countries with a Christian tradition also have their zones for first evangelization. The encyclical, by broadening the traditional image of what mission is, helps us to see that the North and the South together are becoming the object of mission.

"Even in traditionally Christian countries there are regions that are under the special structures of the *missio ad gentes*, with groups and areas not evangelised. Thus, in these countries too there is a need not only for a new evangelisation, but also, for an initial evangelisation" (RM 37a).

New evangelization, initial evangelization ... a task the Church cannot shirk in that part of the world which holds in its hands the keys to a more just world order. No more can evangelisation try to steal away into the corners of the world that are suffering by that unjust "order" and hide there.

This concerns us, the Spiritans, because the line that marks North from South runs up the middle of our Spiritan missionary community. In 1991 there were 1750 Spiritans living in the Northern hemisphere, 1570 living in the Southern hemisphere, either working there or originally from it.

This General Chapter represents these confreres, those from the South as well as those from the North. Do we not have a message to communicate that might get a hearing beyond our Congregation? Do we not have a duty to help resolve the North-South divide by putting the reconciliation of humanity into living practice - between ourselves ?

Do we not have to undertake concerted action to make heard the voice of those who are often without voice, to be "the advocates and the defenders of the oppressed against those who oppress them"?

### 1:6.3 Challenges from discrimination in today's world

It is the sign of the coming of the Kingdom that the Good News is being announced to the poor. Once the Church takes up the cause of abolishing these discriminations, once she identifies with the marginalised in her pastoral thinking and her pastoral acting, then she becomes the sign, the Sacrament of this Kingdom. If "Evangelization of the poor is our end" (SRL 4), then these challenges are of primary concern to us.

### **\* The new poor in industrialized societies**

Over the last few years several Provinces in Europe and in Northern America have gone through a self-examination about Spiritan involvement with these deprived people. Several have set up actual programmes:

- for the homeless,
- for drug addicts,
- for the poor of the great cities,
- prison chaplaincies,
- parishes that are under our care have been re-oriented,
- there are also projects that support workers who are victims of apartheid.

Are these undertakings, linking us as they do with certain intuitions of Claude Poullart des Places and Francis Libermann, to be followed up? And if so, what means do we devote to them?

### **\* Youth in the great cities**

A considerable number of the requests for first appointment that reach the General Council mention a preference for work with youth in the great urban centres. What is in question here is primarily young people who are in such towns in the Southern hemisphere. The unemployment figures among these young people is high in Latin America, in Africa and in Asia. Sometimes this figure reaches 60-70% of the young who are living off their family or making a living as best they can in odd jobs, buying and selling in a small way, guarding parked cars. Among these young people there is a high level of delinquency and drug taking.

Many among them also are migrants. In some of the houses of the *Oeuvre d'Auteuil*, which is in contact with several thousand young people, more than 60% of the children are offspring of migrants.

In many countries of the southern hemisphere young people drop out of school having failed their first examinations. At the same time the entire school system - imported from the North - no way prepares them for the real social and economic needs of the country. The creation of alternate forms of schooling is becoming an urgent duty, as is the rescuing of those who have to live with failure in schooling.

That is how several Circumscriptions have taken action or are planning action to come to the aid of such young people in Latin America, in Africa, in the Indian Ocean.

But are young people such as these not a challenge also in all the urban parishes where we are working and even in the heart of the countryside? Does what we are doing for them measure up to the urgency of the challenge?

The recent Spiritan Symposium on Education insisted strongly on the need to create alternate forms of schooling and it gave examples too of some enterprises that have already started up. This Symposium recalled too that the Spiritans in numerous houses of education, for which they are still responsible, are in contact with a great number of young people, boys and girls.

#### \* Migrants and refugees

The churches are gradually becoming more aware of the role that they have to play in coming to the defence of those who do not have a voice to defend themselves, just as they are also becoming aware that those migrants and refugees who are Christians, are not "foreign bodies" amongst them, but part of the People of God entrusted to their pastoral care. A certain number of our confreres are working for migrants in Europe, in Northern America, in Southern Africa (under the auspices of IMBISA, the Bishops' Conference of Southern African States). Confreres in several countries play key roles in arousing the awareness of civil and religious authorities to the problems posed by the refugee. In view of the fact that the migrant and the refugee is often regarded as the poorest, in view of their circumstances and their loneliness, should not our commitment to them become more significant and of greater scope in the years that are coming?

### 1:6.4 The challenge of communications in the modern world

The Church is becoming gradually more aware of the wonderful instrument that communications offers to the work of evangelization. And yet information and communications have their own constraining laws, laws to which the Church is not always accustomed. The president of the Catholic Press Association of the United States and Canada, who was a lady observer at the Synod of the Laity in 1987, found herself in an impossible situation. As a member of the Assembly she was being asked to take part and as a journalist she was being asked not to say anything.

In *Redemptoris missio*, Pope John Paul II sees in the challenge of communications one of the "main challenges to the mission to-day":

"The first Areopagus of the modern age is the world of communications, ... It is ... necessary to integrate (the) message into the "new culture" created by modern communications. This is a complex issue, since the "new



culture" originates not just from whatever content is eventually expressed but from the very fact that there exist new ways of communicating, with new languages, new techniques and a new psychology" (*RM 37c*).

So the encyclical is reminding us that communications is not simply a problem that the evolution of modern technology has thrown up, it is a problem pertaining to the very nature of announcing the Good News. What know-how do we use to make this proclamation? What means are we using? Are we talking the right language?

If there are a certain number of Spiritans working in the media through the press, the radio, the television, centers for information and producing audio-visuals in Europe and more recently in Africa, we have to admit that our representation in the media is rather on the small side.

A fundamental question concerns young Spiritans in training. Are they getting a grounding in techniques of communication? Are they being trained for the communications world of the future?

A further question: How are we to ensure that Spiritans who work in communications are in touch with each other? Should the Generalate be playing a role, and if so ... How?

## 1:7 UNITY IN DIVERSITY

### 1:7.1 The increased importance of the churches of the South

We have already pointed out, referring to world population, the size of the totals that the churches in the South are attaining. The Swiss theologian, Bühlmann, in his work *La tierce Eglise est là* has mapped out the shift of the People of God towards the South. Antoine Sondag, in *La géographie des catholiques*, presents the Swiss theologian's thinking in this way: "the first millennium of our era had been labelled of the Eastern Churches (the primary Church) - in the eastern basin of the Mediterranean Sea. The second millennium was labelled the Latin Church (the second Church). The third millennium is first and foremost going to History alone will be able to judge the truth of this prediction about the third millennium.

This geographic swing represents also a culture shift. The Church used to exist in a uniform world, a uniform cultural world. Today it is living in a world that is not only pluri-cultural but also pluri-religious, with new pastoral and theological problems. In reaching the ends of the earth the Church becomes more universal, more catholic. In the days of the Second Vatican Council these changes had scarcely been noticed. Of the 2540 who attended



the Council only 150 were not from the West. At the Conclave of 1963 that elected Paul VI, there were only thirteen Cardinals of the "third Church". For the election of John Paul II there were 47 of the total 114.

### **1:7.2 The emergence of different theological emphases**

Every local church inhabits a cultural, political and socio-economic context. That church's link to this context is an essential element of the local church. Being rooted in a human community wherein the Christians are living, has faith value, for this is the setting within which the Christian has to bear witness to his faith, of which he is salt and light. This contextualisation of the Church in different parts of the world and in different human situations, fosters the emergence of fresh and different theological emphases.

#### **1:7.2-1 Latin America: liberation theology**

In November 1986, at the end of the biannual meeting of Superiors General at Frascati, Cardinal Aloisio Lorscheider, Archbishop of Fortaleza, Brazil, presented several facets of liberation theology:

**\* A theology within a specific context, Latin America:**

Liberation theology tries to shake off that domination that exists in the third world, "a domination that is caused by dependency and inequalities that butcher the dignity of the individual and that is an insult to the Creator God". "Liberation theology looks at structures that have to be changed, it pleads with those Christians who construct out of Christianity a theory that maintains them in their privileges".

**\* A theology that takes account of the social dimension of sin without falsifying an understanding of sin's dimension as rupture with God:**

"Sin is everything that in a structure creates dependency, preventing man's full exercise of his existence as a human person", man "locked into a condition that is less than human, sometimes even in the name of the faith".

**\* A theology which starts from the lived reality of Christians in base communities, and not from principles:**

"Liberation theology goes from the base upwards (that does not mean it is horizontal!). It starts with persons who are living in a climate of faith. It is a theology that

is close to people, alongside them, searching for the liberating footprint of God. The people in Latin America bear a deeply-impressed Catholic stamp. Puebla (7) speaks of a radically Catholic substratum. The Latin American peoples have a depth of being that is deeply impregnated by a lived Christian faith, that is the reality. It is in this sense that basic Church communities are a very rewarding network for working liberation theology out".

**\* A theology which gives a place of privilege to key texts of the Word of God:**

The most frequent Scriptural references in this theology are from Exodus, Sinai, the Prophetic Books, Yahew's poor man, Jesus Christ the poor man, the Magnificat. "Liberation theology underlines the liberating effort of mankind inside the grace of God" inversely to a more classic theology emphasising how the grace of God sets man free.

**\* A theology which is not to be reduced to an option for the poor "but to a prophetic commitment alongside the poor":**

"The strong point of a love (choice) of the poor which is preferential, is not to be found - according to the Church in Latin America and the documents of Puebla - in this expression "preferential" but precisely in two other expressions. The option that has been made by the Church of Latin America is a prophetic one, a preferential one and one of solidarity with the poor. The words "prophetic" and "solidarity" are very important and their implications make demands exceeding those of the word "preferential". The term "prophetic" seeks to express the fact that what is in question is an choice based on Gospel and on no other motivations. The term "solidarity" seeks to indicate a commitment alongside the poor, a commitment "that goes to the point of identification with them".

**\* A theology which invites Christians who are "haves" to see how they themselves are involved in certain structures of sin and asks them on their part to work in solidarity with those who are "have nots" for the transformation of unjust structures.**

### 1:7.2-2 Asia: Inculturation and dialogue with religions

"Asia is a vast continent with a variety of cultures and contexts. Any attempt to speak of an Asian theology is bound to be general" (Amaladoss, op.cit., p 45). The following few thoughts are situated within that framework.

One of the preoccupations of Asian theological reflection is the inculturation of the Christian faith in the Asian context, for the good reason that while Asia is the cradle of all the great religions including Christianity, Christianity is - paradoxically - in the minority in Asia and often looks like something foreign. Mystic religions "look upon Christianity as an inferior religion" bound up in laws, structures - what is the essence of the message of Christianity, a message to be lived, a spirituality ... remains undiscovered. It is principally in India that this inculturation is being worked out in practice. To illustrate what this search for inculturation involves, we borrow these lines from Fr. R. Panikkar one of the best known of Indian theologians - quoted in the newspaper *La Croix* "In India the Christian Church grows more and more Indian and it is discovering its closeness to the arch-types, the symbols, the whole richness of Hindu tradition. It would be important for instance to put the Hindu and the Christian conception of sacrifice alongside each other. Doing this yields a mutual enrichment" (*La Croix*, 14th February 1982).

Another dimension of theological reflection which at times is badly understood or suspected of slighting the Christian faith, is dialogue with the great religions of Asia, with Hinduism and Buddhism. The question of how to situate them in salvation history keeps coming up. Reflection has led to shifting the emphasis from where it had been placed in a more classic theology. To quote Father Amaladoss again: "from an understanding that God's plan is centered on the Church, one moves to a vision centered on the Kingdom ... God, his Word, His Spirit have been working in the universe since the creation, leading it to the fullness of the Kingdom. And religions are also elements of this cosmic alliance" (*Spiritus*, N. 104). Such a way of looking at things raises fundamental questions. If the Church is no longer to be the center of the world nor the center of salvation history, then what role precisely does it have in salvation history? And if we look at things this way, how is one to understand the unique and universal role of Jesus Christ? This very question is directly referred to in the encyclical *Redemptoris missio*.

### 1:7.2-3 Africa: inculturation and liberation

It was Pope Paul VI who at Kampala in 1969 gave a new impetus to African theology when he said: "You can and you even ought to have an African Christianity". No synthesis of various African theological researches has been brought out, for they focus more on themes and draw their

inspiration from pastoral necessities. However they do have dialogue between Christian faith and the African traditional religions as a common background.

Some characteristic approaches can be listed:

**\* a theology of inculturation:** Religion in Africa was fundamentally a religious culture that united the sacred and the profane, a culture that was widely welcoming to the world of the spirit (God, spirits, the ancestors). Men lived in a symbiotic relationship with that world. African christology understands Christ as messenger from God, as an "ancestor", the "master of initiation", bringer of God's life-giving power to mankind. In Zaire this work has resulted in the liturgy in the Mass of the Zaire Rite that was approved by the Congregation for Divine Worship in April 1988.

**\* a theology of life:** in the heart the African there is a quest for life, life in fullness, a life that is ceaselessly threatened by visible or unseen powers. This life is at once physical and spiritual, it is health, well-being, harmony in human relationships, with the cosmos and its forces, with unseen powers and with God. In Africa salvation has a dimension of wholeness that takes in every aspect of this life, sacraments are celebration of life. African theological research is bringing a festive note to the universal Church.

**\* a theology from experience:** African theology focuses its research more on an "orthopraxis" than an "orthodoxis", because the African looks to have a living experience of relationship with the Unseen. In putting the stress upon a faith that adheres closely to the lived experience, theology could apply a corrective to too conceptual and reasoned a theology.

**\* a theology of the Church as family:** the fullness of his personal life is for the African in the extended family "I am because we are" (African Religions and Philosophy, Mbiti, J. Heinemann, 1969). The church is regarded as being community wherein each one wants to be at home, in sharing and solidarity; just as it is possible by means of the basic Christian community.

**\* a theology of liberation:** the continent of Africa is living under oppression, either oppressive political systems or the oppression of the international economic order. The slave trade and discrimination took one part of his identity away from the African, from his history, his culture, his dignity. The liberation that Christ effects speaks to the heart of the African, a heart that is specially sensitive to the freeing of the Jewish people that Moses carried out, to the setting free in the cures that Jesus did. The Church is called to break fetters, to lift oppressions by the strength of faith. God's Kingdom is becoming a community renewed wherein brother once more cares for brother.



## 1:7.2-4 Europe and North America

Western theology profoundly marked the orientations taken by the Second Vatican Council, particularly the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et spes*) and the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen gentium*). These may be considered a synthesis of what Western theology had gained in the 1960s.

In the days just before the Council, Western - that is North American and European - thinking was still devoting major effort to the inculturation of the Faith in the modern world. The task it had set itself was to interpret Christian belief in function of secularization and to distinguish better between Faith and religion. In fact Christianity, following its own logic, leads to the demystification of religion: "God died in Jesus Christ".

In the event this theology quickly ran head on into the conservative minority of the Council, backed up by a surge of radical movements that repudiated every positive attitude towards modernity. It was obliged also to cope with reactions from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, defending traditional formulations. Many theologians were trying at the same time to go further than *Gaudium et Spes* wishing still more to unite the language of theology with that of experience.

Some trends of those researches may be recalled:

- \* **drawing theology** (words on God) **closer to anthropology** (words on man) on the baseline of Saint Irenaeus's "man is the living glory of God". The foundations of faith should be discovered in the experience of living. So too faith is to be studied starting from the objective standpoint of social sciences;
- \* **drawing the theology of Redemption and that of Creation closer together.** The emphasis in this latter shifting to the goodness of the created world. (The idea of sin, which became more problematic in this view of things, is nonetheless rebounding in every fresh examination of conscience such as those each new attack on the integrity of Creation stirs up);
- \* conciliar theology of the "**People of God**" and of "**church as communion**" was deepened in a context of tension between it and a more classic theology of church. In countless dioceses lay people were associated every more closely with reflection concerning directions to be followed in pastoral ministry and with their implementation;
- \* **in North America** (there was) an insistence on religious liberty, respect for the individual conscience, woman's role in the Church (the feminist movement), ecumenism (a multi-confessional society);



\* very great effort was invested in **fundamental and in moral theology** (e.g. in the USA concerning genetics). There was a special focus on the historical interpretation of doctrines in their cultural contexts, as also on other religious experience besides the Christian;

We see then how the problem of theology's language holds its place as one of the basic concerns of western theological thought. It should be possible to give expression to Faith in to-day's words and to stand clear of the language of yesterday's philosophy.

How the Faith is expressed for now tries to take more account of new experiences of community living, of the fact that a growing number of the People of God are part of the people of the poor, living intimately cross-cultural and inter-religion encounters.

This expression of Faith is caring also towards the sensitivities of "popular religion" and to an understanding at once positive and critical towards "religion's comeback".

Western theological effort, still drawing life from its urge to stay rooted in Bible sources and an authentic liturgical expression, continues to overcome the challenges thrown up by modern living, by functioning in a manner that steadily makes more and more calls on the experience of its partners from other churches.

### 1:7.3 A Church that is communion

This theological diversity which is intrinsically part of the Gospel's taking flesh in men and women, of socio-political milieu in every local church, far from being a threat to unity, carries enrichment with it. It is time for the Church Universal to make a reality what Vatican II declared " ... each individual part of the Church contributes through its special gifts to the good of the other parts and of the whole Church. Thus through the common sharing of gifts and through the common effort to attain fullness in unity, the whole and each of the parts receive increase" (*LG.13*).

One has however to recognise how diversity has trouble in gaining recognition and acceptance, so greatly predominant still remains the unity in uniformity model. This reaches the point where, in Africa for instance, solutions that National Episcopal Conferences propose for their pastoral difficulties are seldom taken up. How the coming Synod for Africa gets on will furnish a chance to judge what positive advances it will be possible to achieve, so that what is specifically African of Africa may become a real source of enrichment for the Church as a whole.

**Ecumenic dialogue** is a crucial test of our will to be One. The profound changes happening in Europe serve to underline both the urgency and the difficulty this involves. As for Catholic - Orthodox relations, John Paul II recalled recently that "the two forms of the great tradition of the Church, the Western and the Eastern integrate with each other as the twin lungs of one body" and he went on to say that the "sister churches" had maintained fundamentally intact the deposit of apostolic faith. Despite the tension that existed, universality and a plurality of forms had never ceased to interchange inestimable gifts.

As does society, so church has great trouble in living out oneness in diversity. It is a challenge from the Holy Spirit that we are called to live in the heart of the human race. How we in the Christian communities shall succeed in putting communion into lived practice, is going to be without any doubt at some future date one of the criteria judging the success or failure of the announcing of the Good News to the present age. What is certain is that should we succeed within our own Church in practicing a lived communion with our various local churches, we are going to be better prepared (and all the more credible) for living out the great Ecumenic Communion.

## 1:8 TWO KEY ISSUES

The falling number of priests and lay participation in church life.

### 1:8.1 Lay participation in church life

Since the Second Vatican Council the Church has been calling itself the People of God. It was a founding decision on the part of the Council to begin with this basic truth about the Church before getting into reflection upon the Church's hierarchic structure, for it makes it possible to have a better understanding and a better practice of everything that is common to all church members, without distinction, without consideration of persons or social class or Church rank - briefly, the grace of belonging to a people of prophets, priestly and royal (cf. 1 P 2:9).

The Synod of the Laity in 1987 was a new high point of recognition of the laity at the heart of the Church's mission of evangelisation. In the Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles laici*, the Pope emphasises how, "Because the lay faithful belong to Christ, Lord and King of the Universe, they share in his kingly mission and are called by him to spread that Kingdom in history" (CL 14).

In *Redemptoris Missio* the Pope recalls that all the laity are missionaries by virtue of baptism and encourages them to do their missionary work in the vast and complex worlds of politics, business and society and to take part within the Church in the various services, offices, works, ministries and activities of the life of the Christian.

As we go about on visitation we are able to see how everywhere the lay people have been playing and continue to play an important part in the work of evangelisation and in the life of the church; leadership in basic Christian communities, catechesis, parish activists, etc ... In their ordinary lives outside the church context, they give testimony to their belief as agents in development, as teachers, as educational administrators, workers for justice and for human rights.

It strikes us also how vital it is for the lay people to belong to the great national or international Church organisations (Catholic Action, scouting, etc.). What often happens is that lay people are trained in individual or local programmes, which may lack thoroughness and follow-up. The major laity movements of the Church are carriers of a spirituality and a back-up that are more consistent and lasting and they open out to a more universal understanding of the Church.

Nonetheless if it is true that the vocation of the laity is clearly recognised in official Church texts and in what we ourselves write, one may still put a few questions:

\* even if no one questions the fact that just as in civil life so too in the Church the lay person has a right to genuine responsibilities, one may very well ask whether the intensive searching to find an in-church responsibility is not at times being kept up at the cost of a practical job for the lay person towards evangelisation and transformation of the world;

\* in the same way as training of the laity figures as a missionary priority in most pastoral plans, is it not too centered on the life of the Church, to the neglect of formation for the coming of the Kingdom (world of politics, social life, business)?

\* in our parishes, our missions, our institutions are we not reckoning our lay people as co-workers in the practical carrying-out of decisions, without asking them to work with us in arriving at the decisions?

### 1:8.2 Diminishing numbers of priests

We should not allow ourselves to lose sight of the falling number of priests because of increasing participation by lay people at every level in the life of the Church. It is true that in some places in the world there is a

"vocations' explosion" which is forcing religious congregations to make provision for receiving them. However the ratio of priests to Catholics keeps falling even in those countries where vocations are on the rise. Thus in Africa in 1960 it was one priest per 1,700 where at the moment there is one for each just over 4,000. The example of Brazil is significant too. Between 1964 and 1987 priests went from 12,800 to 13,500 but because of population growth, the ratio of priests to Catholics - which in 1964 had been 1 to 6,270 - is in 1987 1 to 10,190. In certain regions a priest may have the pastoral care of fifty to sixty thousand.

One of the consequences, the gravest without a doubt, is what some observers are calling the "eucharistic famine". A frightening number of Catholics are deprived of the life of the Sacraments, above all of Eucharistic life. Parishes spread wider and wider, grow impersonal and become fertile grounds for the sects.

Even in places where lay people are functioning as ministers serving the community (something not found everywhere), such ministry cannot supply for the celebration of the Eucharist which constitutes the Church. The rise in the average age of the priests and their falling numbers impose burdens that are hard for them to bear, leading sometimes to premature ageing and even to individual tragedies. Effectiveness in the pastoral ministry is greatly reduced, particularly in youth work and in living so as to attract to the life of priesthood.

This fall in the number of priests is challenging and calling on the Church, to make its choices on this as on other points, hard choices it is true, but ones with a future, as several Synodal Fathers demanded in the Synod on the Priest.

## 1:9 MISSION IN THE WORLD AND THE CHURCH TO-DAY

At the end of this first section of our Report, these challenges we have indicated allow us to see that to-day more than in any age, mission is being called for in the world and the Church. And yet mission is called in question by the world and sometimes in the Church because it has not always discovered its true nature in every place.

### 1:9.1 Mission called for

The first call for mission is in the appeal Pope John Paul II made in *Redemptoris Missio* in the name of the millions of people who have a right to have the Good News announced to them, he had them in mind when he was saying "missionary activity is only beginning" (RM 30). He says moreover



on the same occasion: "It can ... be characterized as the work of proclaiming Christ and his Gospel, building up the local Church and promoting the values of the Kingdom" (*RM 34*).

Mission is called for too, in the name of the Good News that we announce, by all the challenges that the modern world throws down to it:

- \* the challenge of famine in the world and of the injustices in international relationships, notably the Northern towards the Southern hemisphere;
- \* the challenge of the new poor, the marginalised, the migrants more specially but not only in western societies;
- \* the challenge of the refugee, more particularly in those countries of Africa where we are working as missionaries;
- \* the challenge of the great religions, calling upon the Christian churches, with the increase in certain radical movements;
- \* the challenge of urbanisation, that of the young people in the huge cities;
- \* the challenge of modern living calling for a "new evangelisation";
- \* the challenge of the sects, syncretist movements challenging the Christian faith in its presentation and its praxis;
- \* the challenge of feminism, inequality between man and woman in education and training.

Mission is being called for in the countless appeals that come to us from local churches in which we are at work and from other churches that call on us to help out.

### **1:9.2 Mission called in question**

And yet this mission seems more and more to be called into question in large sectors of the world today and this for different reasons.

It is difficult to obtain entry visas for certain countries:

- \* Most of the countries of Asia refuse visas to missionaries:
- \* Countries such as Ethiopia and Pakistan grant visas only in a limited number;



\* Visas have been refused by the Republic of South Africa to two Spiritans who had received their first appointment there.

This questioning is done in the name of:

\* defending the country against neo-colonialism, the Church being perceived as a foreign power:

\* safeguarding the cultural identity of the people, Christianity being perceived as a foreign ideology:

\* of religion, in the Sudan and Nigeria in the name of Islam;

\* of state security, the Church being perceived as a force for liberation (the Republic of South Africa, Brazil);

\* of a certain type of religious relativism which opposes every type of evangelization.

Sometimes within the Church herself mission is called in question in the name of positions taken up as a result of the Second Vatican Council and as a result of a legitimate and healthy emancipation, for example a local clergy which is seeking its proper place. Mission can be called in question also by a closing in on themselves by some Western churches grappling with problems of identity or the vocations' crisis. This attitude has brought on a crisis of identity in missionary institutes, which have been obliged to redefine their place in the local Church. The Encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* wished to recall their importance explicitly: "They remain "absolutely necessary" (*Ad gentes* 27), not only for missionary activity *ad gentes*, in keeping with their tradition, but also for stirring up missionary fervor both in the Churches of traditionally Christian countries and in the younger Churches" (*RM* 66).

### 1:9.3 Mission as it has been evolving and as it is today

Over the last thirty years the idea of mission has evolved greatly and the emphases have become different:

\* from the situation where the missionary institutes carried the responsibility (*jus commissionis* was abolished in 1969), we have moved on. Now **the responsibility devolves upon the local Churches** to promote mission themselves as well as in the universal Church;

\* the birth of missionary vocations in the Churches of the Southern hemisphere is imparting a style to a new era of mission where all local Churches must be open to the exchange of getting and giving. Mission is being spoken about in terms of **co-responsibility**, of **reciprocal** relations;

\* from an idea that mission was geographical ("mission countries") thinking has moved on to a qualitative understanding of mission. The talk is of "**missionary situations**" which are found everywhere, even if at the same time announcing the Good News to those who have not heard it remain a priority. The encyclical letter *Redemptoris Missio*, while it insists very strongly on the necessity of a **specific mission ad gentes**, asks that exaggeration should be avoided in speaking of the difference between forms of Evangelization: "It is unthinkable to create barriers between them or to put them into water-tight compartments" (*RM* 34). In our meeting at Chevilly on First Evangelization, we found out for ourselves just what a wide interpretation this word is capable of, relative to the on-the-ground situation. Neither is it simple to distinguish Christian communities that are truly bearing witnesses, from those who stand in need of a renewed evangelization. The diversity of our missionary work, which is reflected in our Rule of Life, shows that we have never wanted to fix absolutely the boundaries of evangelization:

\* a more positive manner of looking upon other religions within the plan of salvation is enticing us to a **mission which is dialogue**. The fact that the Christian is no longer opposed to the non-Christian but that we speak of brothers of other religions or of people who believe differently, marks a great progress which is based upon theological convictions (the role of the Spirit) and not upon tactics. Lastly the challenge that the great religions offer helps us to clarify own identity and deepen our understanding of our own faith:

\* the understanding of Church as Sacrament of the Kingdom enlarges our idea of mission. Mission's purpose is not simply to build up a church, but by means of the mission to facilitate **the coming of the Kingdom**. The Encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* steers us clear of too man-centered at one extreme, and at the other of too Church-centered a conception of the Kingdom. Only a deepening of our understanding of the Mystery of Christ enables us to rise above these seeming opposites;

\* the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi*, in broadening the notion of evangelization to all sectors of human life - to development, to the promotion of justice - has vastly enriched what mission is understood to mean. Pope John Paul II, in insisting upon respect for the rights of man, is calling missionaries to account - for the missionary stands at the crossroads of several continents, of several cultures - concerning the justice and peace content in their work of evangelization. **Mission is developing into a serving and a freeing of mankind**. These last decades, as we have already pointed out above, having been marked by the collapse of one method of seeking development, now "conscientisation", "liberation", have become something urgent just as much for the Northern as for the Southern hemisphere of our planet;

\* greater and greater numbers of lay people are getting involved on the ground in mission, a domain which traditionally belonged to priests, religious and Sisters. When laity enter mission it calls in question an approach to mission that functions in rather a clerical style as it has been doing up to now. **The introduction of the laity** into the work that we do is a criterion for a true Church - the People of God. The encyclical letter *Redemptoris Missio* is the first one that speaks of basic Christian communities as a power for evangelization.

**Mission is lived out as an inculturation.** What is being learned more and more is that inculturation is just as much the business of the People of God as it is of specialists. Perhaps it is in this understanding that there is a closer link than had been thought between development, liberation and inculturation. When a people takes its destiny in hand, when it liberates itself, drawing inspiration from gospel values, isn't that the moment when the Good News becomes truly incarnate in its history?



## PART TWO

### THE LIFE OF OUR CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS

#### 2:0 INTRODUCTION

Following this general picture, a picture certainly incomplete and fragmentary of this world we are called upon to Evangelize and having set out where there are some fundamental issues at stake in the life and the mission of the Church, in this second part we are giving a panoramic view of our Circumscriptions and how they, at their level, see and fulfill their mission.

It has never been easy to try and put in a few paragraphs the complex richness and diversity of the life to which we have been the witnesses during our visits. Neither has it now been easy to give a resume of our visitation reports, some of which run to thirty pages. At the risk of misrepresenting the vitality, in giving but a succession of quick flashes, it seems to us important that each capitulant should have a general picture of the Congregation so that the significant experiences may be set in a context. We present the Circumscriptions for you by Spiritan regions in so far as this is possible.

So as not to overload the text we have retained only the statistics that serve to make it understandable. In an Annex at the end of the Report you will find the statistics of all the circumscriptions.



## **YOUNG PROVINCES AND FOUNDATIONS**

In this part of the Report which deals with the life of our Circumscriptions we are putting together Foundations and the young Provinces. According to the Rule of Life 161.2, the Foundations are in fact expected to become Provinces. In the course of our years in office, two Foundations, Eastern Africa and Brazil were erected into Provinces. Another factor is that young Provinces and Foundations share certain common features.

The professed members of these Circumscriptions represent 18% of the professed members of the Congregation. Young people in training constitute 80% of all the young people who are in formation in the Congregation. In coming years the Congregation will have more and more roots in the southern hemisphere.

### **2:1 NEW PROVINCES**

#### **2:1.1 NIGERIA**

The juniorate opened in 1952 in Ihiala. This marks the first attempt in Africa at a Formation programme for religious missionary clergy. The first novitiate opened in 1958. The Foundation became the Province of Nigeria East in 1976. The Province of Nigeria East became the Province of Nigeria in 1983, a Province encompassing the whole country. Today it is the fourth greatest Province of the Congregation with more than 270 professed members. It is the Province that is experiencing the most rapid development.

#### **Formation**

The whole structure for the training programme is now set up, including a postulancy in Owerri. The entire personnel involved in Formation originates in the Province with only a few exceptions at SIST (The Spiritan International School of Theology). The theological scholasticate is common to Nigeria and the Foundation of West Africa. The philosophy cycle is of four years, in order to harmonize the courses that we have, with school programmes recognized in the country. A number of students are studying Arts and Science at the University of Nsukka and in other universities, so that they will have university qualification fitting them for the mission as it will be tomorrow.

SIST welcomes also the Claretians who have a house close by our scholasticate. There is a proposal also to set up a Formation programme for lay people, for religious and for Sisters. The courses have been conceived in

order to impart a well-adapted **missionary theology** for Africa today. SIST is affiliated with the University of Duquesne, Pittsburgh.

Nigeria and the West African Foundation (WAF) are the only Circumscriptions, along with Poland, which start their Formation programme with the noviceship.

### **Mission within the Province**

The Church in the land of the Igbo people grows steadily self-sufficient. Spiritans have answered the call of mission in other parts of their country. Of the thirty-six dioceses of Nigeria, Spiritans work in fifteen. In addition to parish work they are in charge of a secondary college at Toto in a zone which has a Muslim majority; they run a retreat center at Owerri, a creche for abandoned children and single mothers at Kede, a prayer center at Elele in the dioceses of Port Harcourt and there are two university chaplains. Three of our members are full-time teachers at the university of Nsukka.

### **Mission outside Nigeria**

Nigerian confreres are committed to mission outside their country in the following Circumscriptions: in Zimbabwe, French Guiana, Gabon, the Congo, Angola, the Cameroons, USA-East, Ethiopia and Germany. The Province closed its mission in the diocese of Solwezi in Zambia, because of difficulties with the bishop.

### **Self-sufficiency**

The Province has set up efforts of various sorts in order to ensure financial self-sufficiency. There is the Holy Ghost Vocation Movement, a mission procure, a farm at Okija and a small enterprise that is manufacturing poultry feed. Confreres who work in different ministries contribute their share. Despite this and because of the great number of young men in Formation the Province is but 50% self-sufficient.

## **2:1.2 ANGOLA**

In distinction to the Provinces of Nigeria and of Eastern Africa, which were set up while pre-existing Districts on the same territory were preserved, the Province of Angola was created in 1977 by the suppression of three existing Districts. Angola became the Province "of appointment" for all Spiritans who were in the country at that date. It became too the Province of origin for the nine professed Angolans, (3 Priests, 3 Brothers, 3 young professed) and for 11 Spiritans who belonged to other Provinces but who in a conviction of solidarity made the choice of the Province of Angola as their

Province "of origin" (7 Portuguese, 3 Frenchmen, 1 Englishman). At the time it was set up the Province had 92 Spiritan members including 9 Angolans. In 1992 it has 91 members, 38 Angolans. In 1977 there were 3 young professed. Today there are 18 not counting 6 novices and 19 young men in First Cycle.

### **Formation**

The junior seminary in Lândana in Cabinda moved to Malanje. The First Cycle is at Huambo. The Second Cycle for those doing theology in Angola is also at Huambo because the Province sends some of its theologians to the Spiritan Seminary of the Foundation of Central Africa at Brazzaville where there is also an Angolan Spiritan on the staff. The novitiate is at Munhino close to Lubango.

### **Mission within the country**

The Enlarged General Council of 1976 declared Angola a mission priority and appealed to the solidarity of the whole Congregation. The pre-existing international character of personnel in Angola prior to this date was reinforced. Today in addition to 38 Angolans (of whom 18 work in the ministry) there are 31 Portuguese, 8 Irishmen, 6 Dutchmen, 3 Frenchmen, 1 Belgian, 2 Nigerians, 1 member of the FAC, and 1 Pole. Before the civil war there had been 240 Spiritans there. Since the war they have been less than 100. Some of them live in difficult situations created by the war, in isolation and privations of all sorts. Six Spiritans were killed in the war. Because of the tremendous needs of this church all Angolans have received their First Appointments within the country. One Angolan, a former provincial, spent six years, sometimes risking his life, never without discomfort, in the section of the country under the control of UNITA. He did this so there would be some pastoral care for the hundreds of thousands of Catholics in that territory and in order to encourage priests, Sisters and catechists who were living there, some of whom had been forced to stay where they were by the guerrillas.

Since the war ended bishops have been asking us to reopen 21 abandoned missions. Some were closed because of the war, some because of the departure of missionaries. The Province is taking a year of reflection and discernment to decide where to set up, so that the work could be carried out over a zone by a team rather than to locate individuals in each mission.

### **Mission outside Angola**

Since last year First Appointments have been made outside the country. In 1991 Angolans have been appointed to the District of Senegal, to Guinea-Bissau. Recently the General Council has appointed one to the District of Congo.

### **Self-sufficiency**

At the time the three Districts were suppressed the Province took over their properties. It was a considerable gain for the young Province. The Church in Angola all through the war has been supported by the universal Church, by the Congregation and by self-help. The latter heading includes recently the restitution of properties that had been confiscated after independence and this is helping to assure self-sufficiency at least financially.

## **2:13 EAST AFRICAN PROVINCE**

The Superiors of East Africa, working with the General Council, laid the foundations in 1970 for the East African Foundation which was to become the Province of East Africa in 1989. It covers three nations, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Within the Province itself there are three Districts, Kilimanjaro, Bagamoyo and Kenya. Of the Province's members two-thirds come from Tanzania. The number of Kenyans and Ugandans is however growing.

### **Formation**

When the chapel and staff housing for the philosophy scholasticate at Njiro Hill in Arusha is built, there will then be a complete Formation structure. The novitiate is at Magamba, in Tanzania; the scholasticate for theology at Langata near Nairobi in Kenya, where the theologians follow the courses of the intercongregational consortium (a theology Center for religious). Two of our Confreres are teaching there. The Province is endeavoring to have a missionary pastoral experience within the period of theological study.

### **Mission within the Province**

The Province is straining at the present, on the one hand it has commitments outside its territory and on the other there are things it should be involved in order to consolidate its base at home. If we omit the training establishments, there is a parish at Morogoro and at Dar-es-Salaam, in Tanzania, another at Kampala, in Uganda and one which is still only a project in Nairobi. Several members of the Province are working with the Districts of Kilimanjaro and Kenya. The Province has in recent times stepped up its efforts to find vocations both in Kenya and in Uganda.

### **Mission outside the Province**

There are members of the Province working in the District of Zaire and in the Group in Zambia. Two members are working in the United States since last year under an agreement with the USA-West and similarly one



confrere in Germany. Zambia was the first outside mission and the Province is keeping up its support for it.

This Province has been chosen to exemplify the significant experience of the passage of a Foundation to the status of a Province.

#### 2:1.4 BRAZIL

The Province of Brazil was erected on the 2nd of February 1990. Here we have a different type or model of how a Province is developed. During the 1960s the Districts of South, South-West and Central Brazil pooled their efforts to train young Brazilian Spiritan candidates. It could be said that the Province of Brazil is the fruit of this collaboration between the Districts, *interdistridalidade*. But whatever of this, the most significant support from the point of view of staff and money comes from the South District. Which is why quite naturally it was this District that decided when the Province was being erected, to cease to exist as a District and to join the young Province as Province "of appointment". On the occasion of the setting up of the Province of Brazil the Dutch, Portuguese and German confreres have all chosen the Province of Brazil to be their Province "of origin".

##### Formation

The First Cycle and the Postulancy are at Vila Mangalot, on the outskirts of Sao Paulo. The novitiate is in the suburbs of Belo Horizonte at Contagem. There are no novices just now. The Second Cycle is at Jardim Planalto on the eastern outskirts of Sao Paulo about twenty kilometers from the center.

During the First Cycle, courses are followed at the Faculty of the University of Saint Francis of the Franciscan Order (USF). Courses during the Second Cycle are taken at ISTEP (Intercongregational Institute for Theology). Our students are actively involved in parish ministry and at Jardim Planalto this work includes favelas on the outskirts.

##### Mission

The first Chapter of the Province took place at Sao Paulo in September 1990. It was decided that the missionary commitments of the Province were to be: **mission within the Province** with the poor; the undertaking at Juazerio in the northeast of Brazil was adopted as the Province's own missionary undertaking. With regard to **mission outside the Province**, within the context of the Congregation's projects, work would be taken preferably in Latin America. Within the recent past some confreres have been working in Amazonia and in Alto Jurua.

For many years now a few Brazilian confreres have been contributing to stirring up missionary awareness in Germany. In more recent days a Brazilian Brother, having passed some years in Angola, has done missionary animation work in Portugal. Just this year a confrere from Brazil has been appointed to the District of Senegal. The Brazilian Episcopal Conference took as its own the *Puebla* option for *missio ad extra* outside Latin America: "to share our poverty"; "the moment of mission for Latin America has come" as number 368 of the document of *Puebla* put it. Even if the Brazilian Province's development is gradual, the moment for *missio ad extra* has come for it too.

## 2:2 FOUNDATIONS

### 2:2.1 CENTRAL AFRICA (FAC)

The Superiors of Congo, Gabon, Yaounde, of East-Cameroon, of Bangui and of Senegal decided in February 1977 upon the Foundation of Central Africa. In September the same year the first novitiate was opened. In 1986 FAC had 12 professed members, today there are 44. Until 1986 it was the Superiors of the Districts who accepted responsibility collegially for FAC. One among them took a more immediate responsibility. A Superior, not one of the District Superiors, was named to FAC in 1986. The Principal Superiors were to remain as Councilors. In 1989 the Assembly of FAC adopted a less cumbersome structure. The Superior of FAC would be backed up by a council of four members, if possible, members "of origin".

#### Formation

FAC has a complete Formation structure. The First Cycle is at Libreville in Gabon, the Novitiate at Mbalmayo in Cameroon, the Second Cycle at Brazzaville in the Congo. The coordination of these Formation structures, scattered in three countries, sometimes causes problems. The Founding Districts of FAC are well aware of the need for a Postulancy, to carry out discernment and initiation into Spiritan living, prior to the First Cycle. There are Postulancies being set up in each different country.

#### The Mission of FAC

In 1986 the missionary project of FAC was presented at the meeting at Bertoua of the Principal Superiors. In *missio ad extra*, work would be chosen with the abandoned groups of society, by means of the witness given by religious community life inculturated within the poorest churches.

At the beginning, FAC used to send its members to the founding Districts in keeping with the principle that a First Appointment should be

outside one's native culture. In 1989 - 1990 First Appointments were made to circumscriptions other than the Founding Districts of FAC.

Today there are missionary commitments in Algeria, Angola, Zaire, France and Spain. FAC is taking on a new missionary shape.

There are links also with Madagascar, which looked for missionary help from FAC. Perhaps in the future a team or two from FAC may be sent to Madagascar.

In order to have its own staff of Formation personnel, FAC is obliged to send confreres for higher studies. There are three Brothers in FAC. Young people who have the desire to live the Spiritan mission as consecrated lay people are challenging us to define this vocation more clearly and to set up a well-thought-out formation programme for them.

The novitiate at Mbalmayo meets some of its expenses by a small factory producing dried bananas. The scolasticate at Brazzaville also has been trying different undertakings, including the making of candles. But for the far greater part Formation is financed by the Cor Unum Fund.

## **2:2.2 WEST AFRICA (WAF)**

The WAF, the Foundation for Western Africa, was decided upon in April 1979 at Dakar, on the occasion of a meeting of the Superiors of West Africa, Senegal, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Nigeria. From 1979 Senegal joined the Foundation but later rejoined FAC because of the French language. Senegal had been the only French-speaking country in WAF. The first novitiate was in 1980 and the first ordinations to the priesthood in 1988. With this year's six ordinations WAF has 15 Priests, 3 Brothers and almost 100 young men in Formation. There are 10 in the First Cycle, 20 in the Novitiate and 69 in First Cycle and Postulancy. So it is a Foundation which is experiencing very rapid growth. It has developed under the joint responsibility of the District Superiors. In 1988 a Superior to WAF was named. This year he became a major Superior with an independent Council separate and distinct from the Superiors of the Districts.

### **Formation**

Each of the founding Districts of the WAF set up a Postulancy. Candidates passed through the Postulancy before going to the novitiate which starts the Spiritan training programme. The scolasticate for philosophy and the novitiate are at Ejisu, Kumasi, Ghana. The chapel is at present being finished and when it is, WAF will have all the buildings it needs. For theology WAF shares with the Province of Nigeria the SIST facility.

## Mission

As in the case of the FAC, First Appointments were made within the founding Districts' territories and on the same principle, namely the appointment was outside the native country or at least into a different culture. WAF has two members in Ghana on their First Appointments, three at Makurdi, and two in the Gambia.

WAF has taken on a new mission outside the founding Districts in Malawi. Two confreres have just now been appointed there.

Until now WAF members have been appointed within the extant works of the Districts. The time has certainly come for WAF to have its own parishes and works. A more established presence would make it easier to receive vocations and to consolidate the framework of the future Province.

The property at Ejisu is extensive and good farming land. It is being brought under cultivation and in future years is going to make quite a contribution to self-sufficiency. Apart from this farm and the monies which are collected by one Spiritan in America, there is little being done to secure financial self-sufficiency.

Ghanians are in the majority within WAF, but the number of members from Sierra Leone and Makurdi in Nigeria is growing.

Two WAF members, who have already been on mission for three years are studying in Rome to be ready for the needs of Formation of the Foundation.

### 2:23 THE INDIAN OCEAN (FOI)

The Foundation of the Indian Ocean was launched by Madagascar, Mauritius and Reunion. The first novitiate was 1982-83 in Reunion at the parish of St-Gilles-les-Hauts. That first novitiate is considered the official date of the start of the Foundation. A Superior was named in 1988 and took over from the three (Major Superiors) who had jointly been running things. These are still members of the present Council of the Foundation.

## Formation

Nowadays the Formation of the young who belong to the Foundation is taking place in each island. The Catholic University of Fribourg, Switzerland had been tried and the Missionary Institute, London, England. The First Cycle takes place in Reunion in cooperation with that of the diocese. The novitiate is at Libermann House, Rose Hill, Mauritius. The Second Cycle is in Madagascar at the Interdiocesan Seminary of Tananarive.



## Mission

From the outset of the Foundation the priority mission field envisaged was Asia (cf. Report to General Chapter 1986, p.57). This thought had come quite spontaneously, Asia was relatively close by, local people had links with certain Asian countries and, in addition, there was such a very tiny number of Christians in Asia, the most populous continent of the world.

The discovery of a single welcoming country among the countries of Asia has proved to be extremely difficult. In some countries the borders are closed against missionaries, in others there are too many religious already. Assembling a team of older confreres to work along with FOI in setting up a new mission has never been possible. Discernment eventually led to the sending of four members of FOI to the Spiritan group at Aitape in Papua New Guinea. More recently two have been appointed to Pakistan. The effect within the sending churches of this "being sent outside the country", while it assures a real missionary experience to the founding members of the Foundation, serves also to put the Spiritan vocation in clear relief within the sending churches. These churches therefore benefit from the fact that they are made aware of their missionary responsibilities.

So the essential structures for a Foundation have been set up and the missionary orientation is clearcut. Nonetheless, when we think of how few vocations there are, it is still a tiny Foundation. The Foundation has also to think of the problem of dispersal, because the distances between where the Foundation is based and the two places where its mission *ad extra* is, makes frequent gatherings impossible. The first Chapter of the Foundation, scheduled for December 1992, should pull the confreres closer together. Whether there is going to be a fresh mission undertaking in Asia in the not too distant future depends upon decisions the Congregation itself has to make. This objective remains dear to the FOI and will feature at its 1992 Chapter.

### 2:2.4 PUERTO RICO

Ever since 1971 the District of Puerto Rico has been active in seeking vocations for the Congregation. The first five aspirants came in 1976. The official decision to create a Foundation was taken in 1978. The novitiate was opened at Dorado. The first professions were made in 1981 and the first ordination took place in 1985.

## Formation

The Vocation Animation Center, the Postulancy and the First Formation Cycle are at Bayamon where there is a purpose-built house.

Postulants go to secondary school and philosophers to the Philosophy Faculty of the Dominicans in Bayamon.

The novitiate is at Dorado. Between 1978 and 1988 there were five novitiate years. Since 1988 the novices have been doing their novitiate in Brazil. The Second Cycle, the *Teologado Espiritano* is in a different part of Bayamon. The students follow courses at the Dominican Theology Faculty.

### **Missio ad extra**

When the first missionaries of the Foundation set out for Brazil in 1987, it was a great happening for the whole church. Up until then no other Congregation had sent Puerto Rican missionaries outside the island. At present there are Spiritans from Puerto Rico in the parish of Ceilandia in Brazil.

## **2:2.5 ZAIRE**

The District of Zaire had sent Spiritan candidates to East Africa for training before the Foundation was set up. So two Zairian confreres have come to be members of the Province of East Africa. The then Superior General, in his report to the Chapter of 1986, mentions only "Kongolo recently (7th April 1986) received the status of a Foundation by reason of the number of vocations and the importance of the Church of Zaire". At the same time the District as such continued.

### **Formation**

Since 1986 the Foundation has been making use of the structures of FAC (First Cycle at Libreville, Novitiate in Cameroons, Second Cycle in the Congo). This makes it possible to take greater care of the discernment of vocations and an initiation to Spiritan living in the local church. Four years ago a Postulancy started at Lubumbashi.

This year should see the setting up of a fresh start, catering for the philosophy cycle. Use is planned of the already extant Salesian Formation structures at Lubumbashi. The events which have overtaken the country recently have somewhat disrupted all these plans. All other stages of Formation are going to use the FAC structures that are already in place. The limited number of confreres that we have at our disposal means we cannot devote them to independent Formation structures. At present the Foundation has one priest and the coming months should see the ordination of a second. There are in all two professed members, one novice and four in the First Cycle. There are seven postulants.

## Mission

The Foundation's first member was appointed three years ago to the District of Senegal. For health reasons he was obliged to return. The second member has just been appointed to Zaire, which has need of support due to what has recently been happening there.

FAC has welcomed in candidates from Kinshasha in the lower Congo. Amongst the 44 professed members of FAC, five come from this part of Zaire. A joint FAC - Zaire initiative for the reception of candidates should soon be set up in Kinshasha. The District of Zaire, because of the manpower shortage, has been putting off this project up to now, despite remaining committed to it in principle.

The Foundation of Zaire remains closely linked to the District. The District Superior is Superior of the Foundation. All the members of the District are deeply involved in "their" Foundation.

### 2:2.6 SOUTHERN AFRICA

We have been talking about a Foundation for Southern Africa since 1985. No official decision was taken but training did nonetheless begin in 1981 and the first member from Southern Africa was ordained priest in 1988. Over recent years the District has put the structures that are needed for a formation programme in place:

- \* the community of Glen Ash, Bethlehem, is a center for meetings and animation for the purposes of seeking and accompanying vocations;
- \* Laval House at Pietermaritzburg, in the dioceses of Durban, serves as a pre-novitiate and is home for the philosophers and theologians who are following the courses at a joint religious consortium conducted by the Oblate Fathers;
- \* the Novitiate is at Vrede in the dioceses of Bethlehem.

Some young members from Malawi have joined Southern Africa and so the training has become more international.

Because there are interests that are shared there has been discussion of the setting up of a Region to include all Southern Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi. Discussions are going on between the Superiors of these circumscriptions and the General Council is supporting the initiative. Should the whole region reach an agreement on a common training programme, a Foundation to take in all these different countries could be officially created.

## 2:3 NEW PROVINCES AND FOUNDATIONS: COMMON FEATURES

One of the mandates from the General Chapter of 1986 to our Council was that it should support and encourage the development of the Foundations and young Provinces. We shall be returning in the fourth part of this Report, to the manner in which we feel we have achieved this aim. Just now we want to point out briefly some features that these circumscriptions have in common.

### 2:3.1 Personnel for Formation

It is crucial to have men qualified for the work of formation. Before the Enlarged General Council at Arusha, we sent an inquiry to all the Provinces and Foundations as to what they needed in Formation personnel. The resulting list was impressive: sixty men were looked for. It is true that this list took into account some minor seminaries and postulancies. It is also true that there never was a Formation house anywhere in the world that considered that it had adequate personnel for a quality training! It remains nonetheless true that these Provinces and Foundations are getting by with a staff that is quite minimal, something that is certainly damaging to the training being given.

It is most noticeably the recently set-up Provinces and the Foundations which face these problems since they have not had the time to train their Formators. For about another ten years, circumscriptions are going to have to depend upon the solidarity of the whole Congregation, solidarity with the founding Districts and with the Provinces of the northern hemisphere, where men with the qualifications sometimes are engaged in other works.

This Report would like to launch **an appeal to the Provinces and Districts to maintain this solidarity** in personnel, because we have been noticing here and there has been a sort of disengagement.

### 2:3.2 Formation

When Foundations were begun, one of the things being sought was that the candidates to our way of living should be given a **training within their own culture**. Africa was for the Africans, Latin America for the Latino Americans, the Indian Ocean for candidates from those islands.

Perhaps the time has now come to see whether this objective has been attained, to discern the strengths and weaknesses of this training.



Certainly when the moment arrives that the Foundations have (Formation) personnel drawn from their own ranks, it will have been a great accomplishment. But a question arises: there are faculties of theology, some of which have international reputations, opening in numerous places worldwide and one may well ask whether it is always opportune to send all those who are destined to be teachers or formators to Europe (to Rome), or to North America.

In 1986 so that there would not be a multiplicity of training centres and so that the financial and staffing needs might be kept down, some harmonisation was effected. SIST is common to WAF and Nigeria; Brazzaville is shared by FAC and Zaire ... Are there not other rationalizations that need to be made?

The Rule of Life (SRL. 136), foresees "... there shall be a rather long missionary experience during Formation". This experience should usually take place in a culture which is not that of the young man who is being trained. The greater part of the younger Provinces and Foundations, above all those with a big number of young people, have neither the money nor openings in places where they will be welcomed, sufficient to be able to arrange such experiences. If it is true that these experiences are an important part of training, the solidarity of the whole Congregation should come into play both in order to welcome the young men and to supply the financing.

### 2:3.3 Finances

There are only three of the new Provinces and Foundations that are completely or in major part financially self-sufficient. These are the very ones who were "born", so to speak, from Districts or have very close links with Districts.

In the years that are coming initiatives to ensure financial self-sufficiency must be thought out and put into effect. Should one work towards pulling Circumscriptions together into a Region - Foundation plus Districts? Should men from these Circumscriptions be trained now immediately to be able to manage and to administer property and funds? Does each one of these Circumscriptions need to possess a reserve fund?

The question of health and retirement insurance is tied into the financial question. Foundations and young Provinces (with rare exceptions) simply do not have such provision.

Since in practice the resources at our disposal are being devoted to training, new Provinces and Foundations have tremendous difficulty in supplying the needs of their members working in *missio ad extra*. It is true that it is the local churches that ought to be supplying the material needs of

these confreres. We do however understand the straightened circumstances in which some of these churches exist. The Cor Unum Fund has come to the help of some groups. Can it undertake to do more of this without damage to what is needed in the Formation programmes?

#### **2:3.4 Relationships with the Districts :**

In some places the relationship, the linkage with Spiritans of the Founding Districts presented quite a thorny problem. As we have been indicating above, there are Districts that live on as Circumscriptions within a Province. The need to have the identity of the Foundations clearly marked would argue for such a distinction but fusion with these Circumscriptions would be necessitated in order to have a oneness of mission and of Spiritan living. For Districts which have relatively small manpower, joining a young Province does not pose major problems (cf. Province of Brazil and District of Brazil South). Talks are going on at the moment between the District of Kilimanjaro and the Province of East Africa for just such an eventuality. But what about Districts where there are greater numbers of men?

#### **2:3.5 The viability of some Provinces and Foundations**

Some of these Foundations and young Provinces are stretched across different countries and different cultures. The young men receive their training in different countries. Travelling is an expensive item and a person's rootedness in a culture and in religious traditions is not looked after. There are difficulties in administration also, once you begin to think about the difficulties there are in some countries about communications. There is straining between cultures that are different and between major and minor cultural groups. It is our duty to be attentive and to ask the question, how can we make sure of the future viability of these Circumscriptions?

#### **2:3.6 The universality of mission**

*Redemptoris Missio* in number 66, speaks about missionary Institutes that "today, ... are receiving more and more candidates from the young Churches which they founded, ...", Pope John Paul II sees in this a sign of new life for these Institutes which " ... should sense that they are a vital part of the ecclesial community". This vitality inscribes us, the Spiritans, on a fresh page of the missionary history of the Church, where mission is turning more universal, not just a going from "old" churches to "young" churches but mission going from young church to young church and also to the old established ones.

Missionaries from other southern hemisphere countries are to be found alongside our members from the young Provinces and Foundations who are working in the majority of the Churches of Africa where we serve. In Angola over 100 missionaries from Latin America are to be found - something completely new. This "**intercontinental**" mission is happening also in our own family, Nigerians work in French Guiana, a Brazilian in Senegal, members from the Indian Ocean Foundation are working in Oceania in Papua-New Guinea, and in Asia in Pakistan. In the years that are soon to come such things will become more and more common.

Another movement took off these last years. Members from Foundations and Provinces are to be met with in the Provinces of the northern hemisphere where they are working - in Portugal, France and Germany - in stirring up interest in the missions, or they are working themselves in missionary apostolates confided to these provinces: the United States, France, Trans-Canada and soon in Spain and in Canada.

This **greater universality of the Spiritan vocation** is a genuine challenge to the whole Congregation. Are we alive enough to take up the challenge of cultural differences that is going to see the light of day soon in our own bosom? ... to accept the differences in missionary methods? Are we going to be sufficiently full of life to succeed in living in mutually-respecting, fraternal communities which accord respect to our cultural and apostolic diverseness?

## **2:4 THE PROVINCES OF EUROPE**

### **2:4.1 The Region**

Between the Treaty of Rome and that of Maastricht in 1991 deep changes have left their mark on Europe. Gradually, despite certain hesitations, the countries of Europe are drawing together and building up an economic and political bloc of greater and greater significance. The reuniting of Germany has further reinforced the preponderant part that it plays within the European Community.

The end of the communist ideology in the East led to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the resurgence of ancient quarrels rooted in feudalism or nationalism. For these countries the shift from a centralized economy to the free market system is going to be long and painful. The wealth of Western Europe will be capable of attracting waves of refugees adding to those arriving from the South. There is already, as a consequence of this, a widespread tendency to close borders to every sort of immigration, and a steady rise of nationalist movements of the extreme right.

## **The Church within Europe is diversified**

Some Churches are wealthy and traditionalist, some are poor, some are democratic, some - long after the others - are now facing culture shifts. There exists no typical pattern of a church in Europe.

In the West we have watched decline in the practice of religion. No longer does the Church have the influence in society that it retained until thirty years ago. The Church is giving evidence of renewal, in her dialogue with the modern world and by adapting to a secularised society, as in the arrival of new types of community and the place that is accorded the laity.

In the East, the fall of communism permitted a revival of lived religious practice equally to the Orthodox, the Protestant and the Catholic. The Synod of Europe in 1991 echoed this, while at the same time it occasioned a chill in ecumenic relationships.

**The Spiritan Region** of Europe is of relatively recent origin but has already moved forward a long way. Its organization is already one of the clearest-structured in the Congregation, with a Secretariat, Commissions for Formation, for Bursars and for Justice and Peace Co-ordinators. The Region has set up an annual month for Continued Formation at Chevilly and also a month in preparation for perpetual vows. An international novitiate unites Ireland, England and Germany.

### **2:4.2 The Region encompasses ten Circumscriptions**

#### **2:4.2-1 IRELAND**

Although vocations continue to be rare, the effort goes on to improve the training programme. The latest move was the setting up at Kimmage of the Institute of Missionary Theology, a **consortium** of students and professors from several missionary Congregations and Societies.

In September 1990 the Provinces of Germany and Ireland agreed to hold a **common novitiate** at Dublin. Afterward they were joined by the English Province. The Province of Holland and the Province of Spain were equally interested, but do not at the moment have candidates to send.

The Province has improved the programme for overseas experience, coping at the same time with finding both places to send the men and well-trained men to accompany them.

The members who were ordained priest in the big groups of the years following World War II are now reaching **retirement age**. This has moved the



Province to increase the means at its disposal for welcoming them home. The work has extended over various communities and is going to have a considerable impact on the Provincial budget from now to the beginning of the third millennium.

**Confreres who come home** but still enjoy sufficient health and energy to work are a more and more numerous group. They are called MID's (Ministries in the Dioceses). Most of them work in parishes in different regions of the country and six regional communities have been set up for them. These regional communities are working rather well. The case of the members of the Province who are working in the United States is rather similar (cf 2.5.9).

The questions involved in the future of the works of **Education** is still causing a considerable debate. At present it seems to be going in the direction of setting up management structures and of organizing a group of lay people to replace the steadily diminishing number of Spiritans. Thought is being given also to ways to get the colleges committed along the lines of the option for the poor and attention to the problems of society.

The **Justice and Peace** way of acting is better understood and accepted now by most of the members. In recent years the Province has accepted responsibility for a parish in a sector of low income families in Dublin, the parish of Bawnogue. This is in addition to the commitments that already exist at Ardbraccan where there is a house for retreats for people who are poor and at Fatima Mansions in Dublin where there is a programme for the animation of an urban zone.

The **Development Course** at Kimmage Manor is still growing and recently received recognition to run programmes leading to a third level degree.

The Province of Ireland continues to support **missions** in many countries of the world and makes a significant contribution by furnishing Formation personnel in young Provinces and Foundations.

The Provincial and his Council who were chosen by the Chapter of 1988 have relied greatly on Commissions for support, each one dealing with a key sector and with members who are involved directly in the area of concern.

## 2:4.2-2      **ENGLAND**

In spite of falling numbers of active men the Province has found a way to redefine its missionary commitments and to get a number of initiatives off the ground. How this has been accomplished has been selected

as one of the significant experiences for the Chapter: a Province in Transition.

Moving towards an apostolate open to **Justice and Peace**, the Province launched a work for the homeless based in the community in Hendon, London. What is done in practice is to give various sorts of help including a feeding programme to people who are in need. Effort is devoted also to assist the homeless people in reintegrating fully into society and to get in touch again with their friends and families.

The Province has committed itself, ever since the choice was made at the Chapter in 1985, to ministry for youth. There is a house at Salford in Manchester and also one at Carfin in Scotland. One result of this apostolate is to attract vocations, both to the diocesan clergy and to religious congregations of both men and women including the Spiritans.

The Province accepted responsibility for two parishes in **Jersey** in 1989. One of these is a non-territorial parish for the numerous migrant Portuguese workers on the island.

Besides the missions where it has always worked, the Province has undertaken to collaborate with the District of **Southern Africa** by sending young members to work in the project of the Hostels at Durban. Young people have also gone to Tanzania to work in the evangelization of the Maasai people.

The Provincial Council moved from Bickley to **Northwood**. Bickley is now the retirement home and the center for members who are passing through.

## 2:4.2-3      **HOLLAND**

The number of members **retiring** continues to increase through aging and through illness. Several local communities are completely devoted to this major service. In order to fit in with governmental requirements concerning retirement homes, the Province decided to build a new house for retired members at Jennep.

In order to stir up missionary vigour in the Church in Holland there is a team, the **animation team**, which works very closely with young people who have an interest in mission. Part of the animation programme consists in giving these young people an opportunity to try a short-term missionary experience.

Based on the growing interest of young people in missionary work, the Province has just recently set up a programme for **lay associates** which is

called *Medestander* (co-workers). The first two members are at present working in Tanzania and others are being prepared.

Several members work full time in the **pastoral care of foreigners** at **Amsterdam**. The language groups are French, Portuguese and English. Among these foreigners particular attention is given to those who are homeless or political refugees.

In addition to seven local communities there are six regional communities, five of these are working well, with contacts, regular meetings and a spirit of working together and solidarity. A member of the Provincial Team takes part in all the meetings, something that assures an exchange of views on the life and the objectives of the Province.

**Groups which work** on mission, religious life, overseas contacts, finance and communications have an important part to play in working out and evaluating the decisions of the Province.

The Province, because it is one of the largest missionary societies in Holland, works alongside other groups and Institutes in stirring up **missionary interest**, in collecting funds and in ecumenical collaboration.

The Province has published a booklet on "**growing old**", which describes and deals with everything concerning retirement. This booklet sets out the possibilities for a more or less active retirement. The Province has also launched a study on the use of money, focusing on finance from the point of view of religious life, the salaries of employees, solidarity with the poor and the spirit of poverty.

Research concerning the **spirituality of today** has been begun, based upon monographs on the subject at the level of the whole Province.

#### 2:4.2-4 **POLAND**

For long years Poland has been separated from the life of the Congregation and is now opening up more and more to other countries. About **fifteen** young Fathers from Poland are working at the present **in mission** or have already received their appointment for this year.

With a very reduced personnel, who are often older men, the Province has had to keep up its pastoral ministry in Poland, where it has five **parishes** and at same time sustain what was necessary for **formation**. Recruitment, which seemed six or ten years ago to be growing very rapidly, is very feeble at present. Each year there are two or three who are beginning their noviceship. The last Chapter of the Province, in 1990, asked for renewed effort to be devoted to stirring up **vocations**.

With few members who have experience of mission, the Province has a special problem in working out a precise missionary project and a well-adapted training programme. For this purpose it finds itself obliged to recall from the mission men who had only just left to go there.

There are more and more frequent **contacts with other Provinces of Europe**. There are the Provincials' meetings and the young take part in the recollection before final vows. There are language courses. The General Council has paid particular attention to Poland, sending a visitor there each year and in 1991 an **Extraordinary Visitor**. The main purpose of this was to make known in the Province of Poland what was happening throughout the entire Congregation, to help it to improve its training programme and the working of its administration.

State and Church in Poland are facing serious challenges at present, part of a very rapid evolution. The Spiritan Province, if it succeeds in consolidating and developing, is capable of becoming a strong factor in the life of the Congregation.

## 2:4.2-5      **BELGIUM**

The country and the local Church have been obliged in a short few years to face major problems which are difficult to handle - rapid changes in society, problems of culture and all that went along with the ending of the colonial period. The vocations' crisis had a very marked effect upon missionary societies. The Province has had no new professions since 1977.

The capital point was to steer clear of pessimism and the temptation to let things slide, while at the same time being open to other possibilities in mission.

Several initiatives were undertaken in order to give a new outreach to the house at **Gentilles**. Should it be made a Center of Evangelization? Should it be animated by a Fraternity of laymen? Should it be "the missionary conscience of the diocese"? Different answers came together and there was the problem of finding men for the job (should all the younger members be recalled from the mission?), and there was also a public which was really well motivated.

Faced with the drop in manpower and with aging, the Province has turned rather toward less elaborate and more centrally situated **animation structures**. Namur, close to the university, would be a better choice than Gentilles.

Great care has been devoted to **older members** at the house in Nijlen which enjoys the advantage of receiving considerable state financial



assistance. Contracts with specialized centres enable the needs of the confreres who have serious problems to be catered for.

The future of the Province calls upon the **solidarity in personnel** of the entire Congregation, a solidarity that has already been working with the arrival of one French confrere at Gentinnes.

## 2:4.2-6 GERMANY

The Province has chosen to organize **integrated communities** with both older and younger members. Knechsteden continues to welcome aged confreres who need particular care.

A lot of work has been put into defining community projects and improving communication inside the communities, as well as between the communities and the Province.

A handbook has been put together to go along with the Rule of Life and to help in understanding it. This booklet takes account of the reality of everyday living in Germany.

Despite the drop in manpower, the German Province has taken on a **missionary project** which is very dynamic. The following are the principal elements of it:

- \* **an engagement towards the poor:** for example opening a center for drug addicts called the Notel; welcoming refugees into Knechsteden ...
- \* **missionary animation:** confreres from Africa have been called upon to help renew this animation and to create the witness of an international community;
- \* **schools:** a redefinition of their relationship vis-a-vis the Congregation is being researched. The teaching project is being realigned in the sense of the Spiritan charism (Justice and Peace, intercultural exchange with Nigeria, the college at Broich);
- \* **the coordination of Justice and Peace;**
- \* **an opening up to lay people** by means of *MAZ* (a missionary movement for lay people). This movement, whose objective is to heighten the consciousness of the local Church with regard to mission, has about four hundred lay members. At present fifteen or so are doing temporary mission service in Africa or in Latin America.

A group of about twenty lay people also collaborates in a project to create a spirituality for the lay person based on Libermann.

With regard to the different ways the Province is associated with lay people, it is particularly sensitive about giving them liberty to find their identity and the links of collaboration with us that they would wish.

A great deal of work has been done to relaunch the **Formation** programme in the Province and there is collaboration with Ireland in the context of the international novitiate at Dublin.

The Province accepted the responsibility for the group in Croatia which is attached to it (cf. below 2.4.3).

## **CROATIA**

The Enlarged General Council of 1982 designated Yugoslavia as one of six missions in need. The report of 1986 notes that a second confrere has left for Yugoslavia "which prepares the way for a more solid Spiritan presence in this country".

Since June 1987 the Spiritan confreres in Yugoslavia (an international group with one German, one Frenchman and one Pole) are attached to the German Province.

With the coming of freedom in the country the Church has been able to achieve greater liberty. For example the Church can now undertake religious teaching in schools. Since Yugoslavian nationality is no longer required to accept responsibility for a parish, the bishop of Dakovo has given the parish of Podvinje to the Spiritans. So Podvinje became, in August 1991, the first completely Spiritan community in Croatia.

At the very moment that our confreres were beginning to organize themselves for their own mission, that is missionary animation and vocations, the war between Croats and Serbs broke out, putting the patient efforts which they had devoted to consolidating the little mission in the Croatian country, to a very severe trial.

### **2:4.2-7 SPAIN**

The Province of Spain, the youngest in Europe, always wanted its missionary project to respond to what was urgent in the Congregation. Despite very small numbers (twenty-two Spanish members and five non-

Spanish) Spanish confreres are working in Angola, Paraguay, Amazonia and North Cameroon.

In Spain itself members are working in stirring up interest in the **missions** either with other Institutes in local church projects (*servicio conjunto*) or in their own undertakings based upon centres in Madrid, Cordoba in the south and at Barcelona which has recently been restarted. They seek to contact young people and to create a circle of friends the *familia espiritana*, to support the Province and its work. In the former novitiate and welcome center at Aranda a center for rehabilitating drug addicts has been operating for several years now.

The Province still stands in need of the **solidarity of the Congregation** if it is to develop. It has benefitted from this solidarity in the past, being helped by Ireland, by France and particularly by Portugal (several Portuguese confreres are still there). A young priest belong to FAC, who has already arrived and two Nigerian confreres who will arrive in October in 1992, will be witness to the presence of our circumscriptions of the South. The Province would like to be able to have an outreach towards the north of the country which has a great missionary tradition. It does not have the personnel to do this.

Another challenge to pastoral care is the **immigration** of people from Latin America and Africa. There is one man working at present in welcoming in these migrants.

The Province has always been open to missionary lay people. There has recently been a pause for reconsideration and re-evaluation but this remains one of the major objectives in the animation of the Province. There are two lay people still in Amazonia working with the Spiritans.

The Province of Spain is very open to Spiritan regional planning particularly in formation.

## 2:4.2-8

## FRANCE

Organization into **internal regions** is a notable feature of the Province of France. Its animation works mainly by means of it. The Regional Superior in fact relays the Provincial team and is able to keep in close contact with individuals and communities, as also with dioceses, and to help the promotion of different forms of the mission of the Province.

Thus the Province, in cooperation with the West region, opened the *Center Missionaire Claude Poullart des Places* at Rennes in January 1992 (the birthplace of our First Founder). This recent community, which has a relatively big house in the heart of the university city has set itself three

targets: to invite everyone who makes use of the center to take an active part in the Universal Mission, to work alongside young people to build up with them a fraternal community, to welcome strangers into a fraternal intercultural sharing. There is one African member of this community and the Province has just launched an appeal to all the young Provinces and Foundations, asking for collaboration in the service of mission within France.

The hand-over of the direction of the *Oeuvres d'Auteuil* to lay people was a major challenge. How we share in the work there with lay people is going to be one of the significant experiences presented to the Chapter.

The Province is still investing and innovating its activities - ones as diverse as *animation missionnaire*, Justice and Peace, service of the poorest (prisons), the *media*, the *Center d'Information Missionnaire* at Rue Lhomond and the magazines, etc. ... A *Comité Spiritain de la Communication* was set up to make it easier for all active and involved members of the Province to unite their efforts.

As in the other countries of Europe, the question of vocations remains a major challenge for the future of the Province. There are about 20 young people in **training** and at Chevilly a new community has been set up to keep up with new forms of the quest for vocations which the Province adopted. This community is also entrusted with the mission of evolving *groupes de vie évangélique* called *Esprit et Mission*.

The effort devoted to the refurbishment and animation of **older communities** goes on and just now there is particular attention to the training of their animators. Three of the older houses have been equipped to welcome those who are ill and need special care.

Several *Assemblées de Frères* have been held. The purpose is to reflect upon the Brothers' vocation in the present times. The Brothers have an important part to play particularly in running the bigger houses and the services of the Province. Among the types of work the Brothers do, we may pick out some new things such as accompanying vocations, the apostolate of the migrant and medicine.

The animation of the Province is made easier by the way that the three-man **Provincial Team** functions. It is elected either at the Chapter or the Enlarged Provincial Council. In this team a certain specialization is married to a genuine teamwork.

## SEMINAIRE FRANCAIS

The Congregation continues to serve the Church of France in an vital role in accepting the direction of the *Séminaire Français* at Rome with its



one hundred students. There are usually four young Fathers from the new Provinces and Foundations welcomed there while they do specialized study in the Roman universities. The animation team consists of five Spiritans of the Province of France and two secular clergy. The Spiritans could be brought back to three or four. The Province of France has asked **other circumscriptions** for a Spiritan Director who is not French as part of the team.

#### 2:4.2-9 PORTUGAL

Portugal is still going through **the cultural change** resulting from entry to the European Community and the resulting influx of goods and of ideas. These have repercussions in crucial areas, upon family life, the birth rate, religious practice and morals.

The Province has to face up also to the steady aging of its manpower. One member of the Provincial Council has special charge of all that relates to older members and to retirement.

Calling home some members of the Province has enabled **missionary animation and the search for and care of vocations** to be stepped up. LIAM which has developed to the point where more of its members are involved in parishes as pastoral agents should really have a relaunching. The movement "Youth without Frontiers" is growing stronger. Although Portugal does not offer them the same advantages as other countries do for their youth, a lay mission volunteer group is being set up.

The Province is responsible for seven **parishes** throughout the country, mostly in dechristianized regions of the Algarve and the northern frontier.

Following a decision of the Chapter of 1984 the two ways of living the Spiritan calling are put before young candidates in **formation**. Lately, several have chosen the Brother's vocation. The formation only becomes different after the noviceship, which like the stages that go before it, is the same for all candidates.

A **challenge in the apostolate** that affects the Province particularly is the **arrival of migrants** who come principally from former colonies. For twenty years now in the diocese of Lisbon confreres have been coordinating the pastoral care of people from Cape Verde. Our young people of the Second Cycle are engaged too in this. A welcoming center for immigrants from Africa has just been opened next door to the Provincial House, where legal help and advice is offered.

As for the Province itself, it still possesses big houses and some establishments inherited from the past which it is trying to rethink in the

context of the needs of the present. The Province is hesitating about taking part in regional formation structures prior to the Second Cycle. The reason is the obstacle of language and culture. Another consideration is the difference in the scheme of training and education in Portugal prior to the Second Cycle .

## 2:4.2-10 SWITZERLAND

The decision taken at the Provincial Chapter in 1986 to re-orient the usage of the house at **Le Bouveret** marked an important turning in the development of the Province. From being a college and junior seminary it became a center for missionary animation. At the same moment the wish of the Province was to change the sites from which it was working and the places devoted to stirring up missionary interest. It was for this purpose that the Province purchased the property at **Montana** from the General Administration, supported a confrere who joined the Diocesan Pastoral Center at Délémont (Jura) and continued to accept responsibility for the French language parish at Bâle.

As in the case in every new orientation, what the Province of Switzerland decided to undertake will require some time before showing results. The question arose as to whether young people should be **recalled from mission** to staff these new works and foster the development of the Province. A delicate balancing act has to be maintained when fresh vocations are no longer coming along. It is a question that leads to a further one: up to what point should young people be presented with a picture of the mission of the Congregation of this new age, a picture which would include participating inside **Europe** in an **evangelization** directed towards the poorest? This question was put very strongly during the Provincial Chapter in 1989.

## 2:4.3 The Region of Europe: Shared Challenges

In Europe as in many other Regions, cooperation started with shared thinking on the subject of **formation**. Those who were responsible for formation in Europe held annual meetings during which they had the opportunity to handle several topics at the same time: the continued professional training of the Formators themselves which their shared reflection and research was effecting; the gradual building up of a shared thinking and a shared way of doing things throughout the Region; proposals to be put to the Provincials concerning shared houses or common undertakings in the formation field .

Cultural and **language differences** constitute a big challenge. It is one of the obstacles standing in the way of setting up a common formation. At present there is already a shared novitiate in Dublin uniting Ireland, Germany and England. Other Provinces too are thinking over the same type of coming together. There are also those who stand against regional regroupings. Some prefer **to work within their own local area** with missionary or other Institutes.

Shouldn't the steady improvement in this working together of the Provinces of Europe in the field of training, enable some of those who are formators to be set free to go elsewhere in the Congregation to answer the needs of formation? The ratio of Formators to students runs the risk of becoming too high.

One of the heaviest burdens borne by all European Provinces is making provision for caring and medical attention necessary for **ill or retired confreres**. An outstanding effort has already been made in this field in the majority of Provinces.

Undertakings concerning **Justice and Peace** have received great encouragement from the Region, particularly in caring for people who are newly reduced to poverty, for immigrants and for refugees. The Region also stands behind the development of the Faith and Justice Network for Africa.

Thought is being devoted at the moment to setting up a shared **Information** facility. It promises to be the start-up of a common undertaking to which all would have something to contribute.

Several Provinces have already begun setting up a programme for **lay associates** but it is still something that needs to be worked out fully in the future. Should the effort to find **vocations** as priests and Brothers be promoted inside a wide framework of presentation of the Spiritan vocation?

Perhaps - for reasons that vary from Province to Province - **re-evangelization** work inside Europe should be given consideration. There is here a balance still to be achieved, between work to be undertaken inside Europe and *missio ad extra*.

Some of the Provinces feel they are moving towards a status close to that of many of the Districts: like them they have their own missions; more and more they have to rely on manpower arriving from outside and they are counting more and more on "**internationality**" not only to be able to stay in existence but to reflect an altered picture of Mission.

The Region is interested in sharing a common enterprise for the evangelization of **Eastern Europe**. The Region has asked the Province of Poland to come up with ideas about this. Perhaps now is an opportunity for

the entire Region of Europe in solidarity to take on the upkeep of our work in Croatia.

## 2:5 THE PROVINCES OF NORTHERN AMERICA

### 2:5.1 The Region

The expression "**region of North America**" is inadequate because the region takes in the Province of Trinidad, the Districts of Haiti and of Puerto Rico as well as the Group in Mexico. Historic and practical reasons explain this extension of the Region.

At the beginning of the 1970's when the Region was set up it was practically the only one in the Congregation. Circumscriptions that did not have links with the region joined it and the Northern American one welcomed them with open arms. There exist natural links also which remain valid: Puerto Rico is a District which is linked historically with the Province of USA(East); the Group in Mexico (before its personnel became diversified) was a dependency of the USA West Province; Trinidad has links which go back a long way with the two Provinces in Canada; refugees from Haiti sought safety in the United States and in Canada. The problems that arose following the coming-together of North and South, were a challenge that has been very enriching.

### 2:5.2 The geo-political context

In a Region that is so vast it is very difficult to present some shared realities. On the one hand there is the **immensity of Northern America** containing two political entities which, despite the economic recession, fall foursquare into the category of "North". The United States looks to be the only super-power in the world, setting itself up as guardian of a new world order. Canada is facing the separatist movement of Quebec and the claim to autonomy made by the Indian peoples.

The islands present very contrasting situations: Haiti, which the United Nations considers the poorest country in the Western world, still awaits political stability and an improvement of economic conditions; Puerto Rico linked to the United States, fights to preserve its hispanic culture; Trinidad, economically, stands between the North and the South and tries to assert a national identity; Mexico belongs to hispanic culture but is turning more towards the United States than to Latin America. The Indian population, which is large, counts itself marginalised .



### 2:5.3 Religion

North Americans with the possible exception of the people of Quebec, continue to practice religion. The percentage of weekly worshippers is between 40-50%. There is huge diversity in religious affiliation and if we except the fundamentalist groups, **ecumenism** is already an accepted fact. The Sisterhoods who are well trained play an important part in the North American churches and support movements which are active in seeking equal rights for women. The struggle against abortion is particularly vigorous.

Catholics are by far the majority in Mexico, but their instruction and training as Christians is relatively weak. This applies particularly to Indians who are in practice limited to devotion to our Lady of Guadeloupe. Again in Puerto Rico Catholics are the majority by a wide margin, while at the same time fundamentalist groups are spreading quite widely. In Haiti Catholicism is mixed in with practices from African cultures. Voodoo is widespread. In Trinidad Catholics, Hindus and Muslims live happily alongside each other.

### 2:5.4 The development of the Region

It was clear and accepted from the very beginning that if it was to be more than a talking-shop, the Region would have to center on a **common undertaking** implying preferably courageous decisions that would bind the different parties together. **Training** became the principle objective and following serious ground-work an international novitiate was opened.

Another shared undertaking was in response to the **plight of Haitian refugees** escaping economic and political oppression. To cater for them a center was opened in Brooklyn as a collaborative effort. Eventually an office was set up in Washington staffed by a Spiritan priest-lawyer to ensure the follow-up of political questions. This still functions. In more recent times the Provinces have committed themselves to the support of the Mexican mission.

Spiritans from the Province of Ireland who came to the United States either during Nigeria's civil war or more recently from "mission countries" constitute a group whose delegates take part in all the Regions activities.

### 2:5.5 THE UNITED STATES, EAST

Between the years 1986 and 1992 membership went from 160 to 122. This is a **rapid fall** and vocations are not numerous. Looking after the older

members continues to be an important ministry. Several undertakings have been set up in this field.

Christian **education** has always been an important work in the Province, the best known evidence of this being the University of Duquesne. It has pulled out of difficulties during the end of the 1980s and has its first lay president. There are new buildings, new courses, an increase in the number of faculties and of students - all of which bears witness to the esteem in which the university is held in the church of Pittsburgh.

The university has a policy of welcoming overseas students in order to build links with Spiritan undertakings in other countries. Along these lines, and particularly important, is the fact that the Spiritan International School of Theology in Nigeria may confer diplomas on its students, diplomas from Duquesne.

The fall in the number of active personnel and decisions made by the Province have led to **withdrawal from certain works**, mainly from parishes. Nonetheless the Province has answered the challenge of the **apostolate to Afro-Americans** by continuing to take up new parishes in the Carolinas. The regional communities have been regrouped to enable them to maintain contact.

The build-up of the **lay associate** movement moved up a gear when a family and its eight children moved into the unoccupied novitiate building at Dorseyville. This has become the nerve center of development for the lay associate programme.

Work for **Justice and Peace** continues to be directed principally towards the ongoing Haitian drama which has been heightened by the expulsion of Father Aristide and by the waves of refugees coming to the United States.

The programme for **Haitian refugees** is going to be presented as a significant experience.

In 1991 the Province hosted two important Spiritan international meetings - on the Laity and on Education.

The Province continues to support the District of Kilimanjaro and in this way has contributed to the setting up of the Province of East Africa. The Province still supports the District and the Foundation of Puerto Rico.

## 2:5.6 THE UNITED STATES, WEST

The Province has undertaken new activities following the Chapter of 1989.

So as to draw the members closer together some distant parishes were given back to the diocese. This has enabled activity to be redirected toward **Afro-American and Hispanic parishes**. Local Churches have difficulty finding apostolic workers for these parishes. All this has helped to renew contacts on the level of the whole Province.

A new building has been constructed in California for a retirement home and through the generosity of a donor a new center for missionary animation has been constructed in San Antonio in Texas.

Following years of reflection and discernment, the Province has set up a programme for **lay people** and part of the San Antonio animation center is at their disposal.

The Province accepted First Appointments to Algeria and Brazil and continues to support the Group in Mexico. It has catered for two confreres from the Province of East Africa ministering to poor people in the United States.

The apostolate with Afro-Americans and Hispanics goes on. Besides parishes, chaplaincies to university and to hospitals, the Province is supporting one of its members who has great responsibilities and commitments in the animation of activities for the black American population.

## 2:5.7 CANADA

Without any doubt whatever the land covered by the Province of Canada is the **oldest mission field of the Congregation**. It goes back to the pioneers of the Holy Spirit Seminary in Paris, men such as Père Maillard and Père Le Loutre who came to bring the Good News to the Acadian colonists and to the Micmac Indians. Since those days Spiritan presence in French-speaking Canada has known many a high point and many a low.

The **College St. Alexandre** was an important work of the Province for long years but the fall in manpower and thinking about what should have priority for the Province have brought the college to adapt to the modern situation. After a long time of discernment the college was confided to a lay corporation. Care was taken in working out the terms governing the transfer, so that the spirit inculcated by the Spiritans might continue and at the same

time members could work in the school in the field of catechetics, pastoral care and administration.

The well known Center *In'Afu* continues to attract numerous young people who come there to reflect on spirituality in the modern world and upon evangelization.

*In'Afu* also was the place where in 1989 a meeting concerning overseas work experience (OTP) organized by the North American Region took place. There were fifty participants, students, training personnel and administrators.

The Province is still working in the pastoral care of physically and psychologically handicapped people. This work was started thirty years ago.

Although the Province does not have many members it has kept up its commitment to the *missio ad extra* - there are nine members in Nigeria in Kwara-Benue, four in Mexico and one in Paraguay.

The Province also takes care of **migrants** and **refugees**. With other North American Provinces it has played an important role in the moral and material welfare of the diaspora from Haiti.

## 2:5.8 TRANSCANADA

In the field of Catholic education the Province has contributed to the opening of a fourth college in the Toronto region and opened an orientation and animation center for Catholic teaching personnel. Efforts in the field of **education** have been directed principally towards the immigrant population from Europe, the Caribbean and from Asia. Several Spiritans who are teaching are coming up to retirement or have already taken it.

Lay Spiritans continue to increase. They are actively engaged in Justice and Peace, the apostolate to the Indians, the animation of retreats, education, medical ethics and the family life apostolate.

The ecumenic association VICS recruits lay missionaries and sends them in answer to request just about all over the world. Over three hundred and fifty have already been sent. Many continue to participate in the work for development and for peace after they have returned.

The Province has kept up its drive to welcome and to assist **refugees** to settle down. An unoccupied training center is used to receive those who have just arrived. Spiritans and lay volunteers (VICS) work in this apostolate of welcome.



First Appointments were accepted to Aitape, Papua New Guinea. The Province has undertaken to support a training programme in Malawi. The Province continues its policy of welcoming Spiritans from young Provinces and new Foundations who come to Canada to continue their studies.

## 2:5.9 PROVINCE OF IRELAND MEMBERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Although there have been contacts between the Provinces of Ireland and the United States ever since the opening years of the century it was only in the aftermath of the civil war in Nigeria that Irish confreres arrived in larger numbers in the United States. They did so thinking their stay would be temporary and they would be able afterwards to go back to Nigeria. When the moment came that it was clear they could never go back to Nigeria, the majority left for different missions: Ghana, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Brazil, Trinidad, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Canada and indeed to other places. A certain number however, above all the older men, opted to remain in the United States.

Down through the years the membership of the group has changed and at the moment the majority have served in countries other than Nigeria.

The group is dependant on the Provincial Superior of Ireland. He names Delegates in the United States. At the moment there are 72 Spiritans divided into three **Regional communities**: Long Island has forty members; New Orleans has nine members; San Francisco has twenty-three. The average age is 66.8 years. Twenty-five men are over 75 years old, four are between 51 and 55 years old. The group also welcomes confreres who come for further training and the confreres who come to collect funds in the United States. These latter do not become members of the group.

Relations with the Provinces of the United States have improved considerably. The Provincial Superiors of the United States and those who coordinate the Irish group have regular contacts and work together in understanding. For the first time next year the Irish will be the hosts for the Regional meeting of North America.

Besides taking on interesting and frequently challenging ministry, the group has devoted itself to collecting funds for the Province of Ireland and that Province's undertakings in the mission. The group of Irish confreres in the United States helps to make it possible for their Province "of origin" to furnish challenging ministry for confreres who come home and who still have the ability and the energy to work.

## 2:5.10 SAINT-PIERRE-ET-MIQUELON

The islands of Saint-Pierre-Et-Miquelon (*Collectivité territoriale d'Outre-Mer* belonging to France) has had Spiritans working there since 1763. One of them is Mgr. François Maurer who is vicar apostolic and principal Superior. The Spiritans are the pastors of these islands. The great majority of the 7,000 inhabitants are Catholics and Christian faith is deeply embedded in the history and the culture of this people who from generations have had the hard labour of fishing for cod. Even though the influence of the modern world which comes to them from the mainland and from America has led to a falling off in their religious practice, the Christian community is vigorous and parish activities numerous and very varied. There are several of our members who are native to St Pierre-et-Miquelon.

## 2:5.11 HAITI

The Spiritans were expelled in 1969 by the Duvalier regime and they came back on the 19th of December 1986. Bishops, priests, many religious men and women, and the laity longed for this return.

There remains a difference and a latent cause of conflict with the Archbishop of Port-au-Prince, Mgr. Ligondé. Duvalier confiscated the **College St-Martial**, a Spiritan property and gave it to the Archbishop who ever since then has claimed to be the owner. Mgr. Ligondé proposed, following a visit on the 10th of August 1987 by the Superior General, that the documents concerning St-Martial should first be looked at by a lawyer and by a church councillor which each party would name. Despite repeated demands from the Spiritans it has proved impossible to have the conclusions of the lawyer nominated by the archbishop nor has it been possible to make progress in this affair.

At present eleven Spiritans are divided into **four communities in three different dioceses**: Port-au-Prince where there are the District house and Formation communities; Pont-Sonde in the dioceses of Gonaives and Jacmel which is the diocesan center of that diocese.

The conflict with the Archbishop of Port-au-Prince has made it extremely difficult to have any ministry officially in the capital.

The Spiritans on re-entering Haiti chose **to serve the poorest people** and chose to remain closely with the people who are sinking ever deeper into misery and insecurity. The courageous stand that our confreres have taken against injustices have had them suffer physical threats on several occasions. The declarations that they have made in agreement with the Conference of Religious of the place have served to increase the tense relationship with the

bishops. Following the coup d'état in September 1991 which overthrew the democratically elected president, Spiritans have stayed loyal to the side of law and have defended the rights of the people at the risk of their own lives.

The fact that since we have come back young people from Haiti are again seeking to enter the Congregation, is an encouraging sign and a token of hope for the future.

## 2:5.12 PUERTO RICO

This is a fine example of a District where the torch is gradually passing on to a Foundation. The District now has only eleven members with an average age of 69 years. On the other hand the young Foundation is in full growth (cf. 2.2.4) despite the fact that several young professed have left recently and despite the death of one of its young priests - a native of Columbia in fact - in Brazil, where he was a missionary.

The parishes which the District was running have been passed gradually over to the diocese. At present there remains only one. The rector of the Catholic University of Puerto Rico is a Spiritan.

## 2:5.13 TRINIDAD

Spiritans came in 1863 to found **St. Mary's College**. Trinidad became a Vice-Province in 1963 and a Province in 1968. There are 35 members, average age 52, from six different ethnic groups.

The country is multi-racial and pluri-religious. 41% of the population are of African descent, 40% of Indian, 17% are of mixed race. Of a population of 1,200,000, 33% are Catholics, 25% Hindu, 15% Anglican, 6% Muslim and there are other smaller religious groups.

The **mission of the Province** is principally in the local church, in colleges of which two are run by the Spiritans, in ten parishes and in the very well-known work, **SERVOL**. This consists of a number of enterprises for the training and education of young people. It has already had an outreach to other Caribbean islands. This is one of the significant experiences selected for the Chapter.

In *missio ad extra* the Province has some confreres and one on OTP (overseas training programme) in Nigeria, there are others in Brazil, elsewhere in the Caribbean and in the country's diaspora, in London England, in New York USA and Toronto Canada. An overall rethinking of the Province's mission has been going on among the confreres for some time.

There is a unique pattern of formation. There is one Formation house beside the parish church of Arouca and all the students take part in parish life. The number of candidates has been rising in recent years and none of the entrants is young. This year there are four young professed, not counting the man on OTP - and six students in the First Cycle.

#### 2:5.14 MEXICO

This apostolic Group is special, as it is the only enterprise we have that is working with the Pre-Colombian Americans, here the Huastecas. Although there are only nine priests, the **group** is very **international**. It is composed of men from America, Ireland, France and Canada. It should have been even more international if a young Spanish confrere, sent on First Appointment, had not died before joining the group.

A certain number of young Indians feel attracted to the Congregation. The Group does have a **plan for Formation** and has candidates of whom a few have already reached the stage of theology. Mexico has not given up on the idea of an international novitiate shared with other Spanish-speaking groups.

In addition to a ministry with the dozens of little scattered communities over the lands of the Huastecas Indians, some of the confreres established a Catholic presence in the University of Tampico, where diocesan seminarians and our own students follow the First Cycle. At this Chapter the apostolate to the Huastecas Indians will feature as a significant experience.

There is a plan to set up in **Mexico city**.

#### 2:5.15 The challenges of the Region

For Spiritans of this Region, the evangelization of the world of today in the context of a secularised society is the principal challenge they face. How does one **inculturate the Gospel** in a high technology society?

**Justice and Peace work** is specially directed towards migrants and refugees. Even if care for the Haitians is the biggest job, the Provinces have committed themselves also to looking after displaced persons from many of the world's countries. They have been working together - either in setting up ethnic parishes, principally for Portuguese and immigrants from the West Indies - or in supplying ministers for these parishes. Spiritans in education have helped these new arrivals to integrate into society.



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As concerns the Church, two sources of disquiet could be mentioned. The gains made by evangelical sects - often financed from outside the country for political reasons - and the growing strains within the Church, as recent discord between CELAM and CLAR demonstrates.

The great wealth of the Churches of South American is doubtless the quality and the faith of their people. What they bring to the Church universal is their approach to theology and to pastoral care, as well as a contextualised approach to the new evangelization (please see 1.8.2.1).

## THE SPIRITAN REGION

When dealing with Latin America, we should speak of Mexico and Puerto Rico, in addition to Brazil and Paraguay, for their culture is surely Hispanic in its roots. Because of the way we are doing this Report, these countries have been dealt with the framework of the North American Region of which they are members. Again the Province of Brazil has already been described in number 2.1.4 when dealing with young Provinces. What we are including now under this heading are the five Districts of Brazil and Paraguay.

Paraguay is a country bordering Brazil, close in geography, in its story and in its culture. So it is natural that it should join the six Districts of Brazil (reduced to five with the creation of the Province) which had been organised in a Region since the Chapter of 1974.

The Superiors of the Region meet twice a year. The meeting facilitates mutual aid and information. The confreres working in Formation and recently those responsible for Justice and Peace also meet regularly. All the members of the Region are invited to a General Assembly every two years. This meeting, called the *Encontro*, which was held in 1988 at the conclusion of a Generalate visitation, was the starting point for a transition process that culminated in the creation of the Province. For six years now an **information bulletin** produced by the Province has been serving to keep the confreres in close touch with each other. It takes its name - *Mandacari* - from a shrub in the northeast of the country which flourishes in dry regions.

This fraternal and mutually helpful spirit is expressed by the term *interdistritalidade*, a Brazilian word. The most noticeable results of this shared work of the Districts was the setting up of the Province and the supply of personnel for Formation houses. This mutual help is continuing.

## **2:6.1 THE DISTRICTS OF BRAZIL**

### **2:6.1-1 AMAZONIA**

Amazonia has its own distinctive characteristics. The climate is harsh, the population few, the distances great. Tefe remains a Prelature with a Brazilian Spiritan as bishop since 1984 Don Mario Neto.

Three pillars bear the prefecture's pastoral programme: the base community, the training of lay people to take charge and of the diocesan priests and corresponsibility at all levels and from the ground up in the pastoral work.

Recently the manpower of the District has been to some extent renewed because the average age of the members is rather high. The 19 members of the District at present are of seven nationalities; eight from Holland, all rather old, three from Spain, three from Portugal, two from France, one from Germany, one from North America and the bishop who is Brazilian. During this General Council's term in office five First Appointments were made.

There is no shortage of problems because of the work situation described above. Consequently despite two annual assemblies of all the pastoral agents and despite community living at the level of the overall group, pastoral coordination is not easy. Although we do not bear official responsibility for this Prelature, we have been there more than a century and the difficult working conditions make this District worthy of the Congregation's special care. None the less it would be a desirable move if other institutes could participate in this mission as it would be to the benefit of diversity and complementarity.

### **2:6.1-2 ALTO-JURUA**

The area of the District, where there is but one diocese - that of Cruzeiro do Sul - is in the Amazonian basin, a land covered in water and forests, very poor and almost forgotten. The majority of its 150,000 people struggle to survive by gathering rubber in the forest.

Their whole region has suffered a tremendous transformation because of the pushing through of the Trans-Amazon highway. There is a new colonization, an invasion of the lands, which is not without damaging impact on the balance of nature nor without serious consequences for the Indian population.

The diocese of Cruzeiro do Sul, erected in 1987, owes its origin to the work of Spiritans. Most of the priests there still are Spiritans. The first ever priests from the diocesan seminary, three of them, were ordained only in 1991.

The present situation causes worry for the District as for the diocese. The average age of the Spiritans is 65. Not many voluntarily offer to go there, and there are various reasons - the great distances, a far away land, a diocese too turned in upon itself, the isolation of the mission stations. If there is no renewal or diversification of the manpower, there is only one way the diocese can go. General Council has only been able to make one appointment to this District.

The priorities which came to the surface on the occasion of a recent pastoral assembly, are three: the training of lay pastoral agents, the pastoral care of the family and the defense of human rights.

There is a junior seminary of the Province of Brazil that has been running for years now at Cruzeiro do Sul, and a First Cycle has been added.

### **2:6.1-3      CENTRAL BRAZIL**

The confreres from Holland set up in the State of Minas Gerais about the year 1950, from a base in Amazonia. They were hoping to find vocations for the north of Brazil. Later from 1963 they became members of an independent District.

Tremendous work has been accomplished, in numerous parishes and various dioceses in the State of Minas Gerais, in the schools and the Spiritan seminaries that the District founded. It was this District in 1961 that opened the first Novitiate at Teresopolis, RJ. Central Brazil has been working down to the present in the Formation which has led recently to the erection of the Province of Brazil.

The great problem facing the District now is the ageing of the members of whom there are 29, 18 at retirement age. The majority of these confreres are generously still at work in their parishes. Several other parishes have however had to be handed back to the dioceses, for example the parish Don Bosco at Belo Horizonte which served as the central house of the District. The central house has moved to Gloria in the suburbs of the state capital. The college of Itauna founded in 1952 has just been handed over to an association of laity. Spiritans will continue there in a pastoral role.



## 2:6.1-4      SOUTHWEST BRAZIL

The members of this District, set up in 1963, come from the Province of Ireland. The principal places of work are Sao Paolo and Rio de Janeiro, others are in the northeast, Recife and Juazeiro and some at Rondônia. The District has a tradition of helping out in the Formation houses of the Province of Brazil.

The members of this District pay special attention to "**frontier situations**", to *favelas*, to zones of poverty, to the pastoral care of the earth or the Indian, to Justice and Peace, and to the world of youth. The average age is below that of all other Districts in Brazil.

The problem that the Assemblies of the group have been facing, is how to reconcile personal pastoral projects and a truly common undertaking. The District has been severely tried by the deaths, in a space of three years, of three relatively young confreres including the District Superior. There has also been the recall of several members to serve various services of the Congregation.

## 2:6.1-5      SOUTHEAST BRAZIL

After the civil war began in Angola some members of the Province of Portugal came to Brazil. At first they considered joining an extant District but due to circumstances they set up in groups. Others came after that from Angola and Portugal and the group spread to the outskirts of Sao Paolo, principally the diocese of Jales, at that time without clergy, between the States of Sao Paolo and Mato Grosso. The group became a District after the General Council Visitation of 1978.

The work accomplished in the zone of Sante Fé, Jales, contributed to the renewal of the pastoral ministry of the diocese. Four years ago, deciding that the diocese could get on without them, the members of the District changed pastoral direction. Last February a former parishioner of Santa Fé was ordained priest as a Spiritan.

Around Rio, the District has parishes in the Baixada Fluminense, the diocese of Nova Iguaçu, a zone where there is much criminal activity, and principally in the seaside area of Niteroi which, from the point of view of religion, is very abandoned.

This District has been very generous towards other Circumscriptions. Despite the small number of its members it has sent two to Amazonia, answering an appeal from there. Another man has gone to the Novitiate of the Province of Brazil and a fourth is working in the Generalate in Rome.

After several deaths and the return of other members to their Province "of origin" the group now has 11 members with an average age of 57.

## 2:6.2 PARAGUAY

At the moment the group has 9 Priests and 2 Brothers, of 5 different nationalities. In Asunción, where the parishes have been returned to the diocese, is the central house and a house for Formation. From the beginning down to today our members have set up principally in the *campo* around Lima, a town 300 kilometers northwest of the capital. The parish structure used there is a central community with dozens of little rural communities surrounding it.

The political regime changed in 1989. Previously there had been a dictatorship and fear of all reform. Even today however, in spite of liberalization, politics is dominated by the private interests of those who retain power. The system condemns the *campesinos* to live as best they can, with no help from the government and with no tenure of their land holdings. The confreres seek to vindicate the people's rights, just as another man, in the diocese of Chaco, is standing up for the Indians. The inspiration for the pastoral approach comes from following the guidelines of the CNBB of Brazil: base communities, training of a committed laity, the family, the preferential option for the poor. These are the priorities.

The Chapter of 1987 gave a new thrust to the group. Principally it reestablished regular meetings for all the confreres and the accompaniment of **candidates to our way of life**. At the moment there are six students in the First Cycle, one doing his overseas training programme in Brazil, and one in the novitiate. A piece of land on the outskirts of Asunción was bought with partial help from the Cor Unum Fund and a small house for Formation was built. Very soon a second phase will be added to that building, intended for a planned Hispanic novitiate. Conditions in Asunción favour this sort of arrangement. Mexico has expressed interest, as has Puerto Rico. Several Institutes have houses for education and training there and a common novitiate programme already exists.

## 2:6.3 Conclusions

At the end of this overview we may draw some conclusions.

\* **Solidarity** between all the members in the Region helped to create and continues to support the Province of Brazil.

\* In three districts (Central Brazil, Amazonia and Alto Juruá) the **average age** is **high**. Brazil Central intends gradually to hand parishes back to the dioceses. The General Council managed to send a small reinforcement of young men to Amazonia, but the District continues to need the Congregation's care. Alto Juruá, while it is trying to diversify its personnel, also needs looking after.

\* The **Province of Brazil**, having its own missionary project, does not supply personnel to the missionary commitments of these Districts.

\* The plan for collaboration between Paraguay, Mexico and Puerto Rico for a **common novitiate** presents the Congregation with a particular challenge. It is the challenge of our development in the Hispanic world. This presupposes qualified staff, which these circumscriptions with their small numbers are unable to supply.

## 2:7 THE FRENCH-SPEAKING WEST INDIES

This region is made up of French Guiana, Martinique and Guadeloupe. Looking at the geography, one is rightly amazed that these **three** should be put together because Guiana is in the northern part of the South American continent. In this case the over-ruling consideration was language and culture.

These three territories are départements of France. For some time now the Superiors of the Region have been meeting regularly, yet because their coming-together is relatively recent and the situation of the ministry in Guiana has its own special traits, no true common project yet exists.

### 2:7.1 FRENCH GUIANA

French Guiana, bordering on Brazil contains 150,000 inhabitants. This is a **tiny population** scattered over 90,000 square kilometers and concentrated mainly in the towns, Cayenne, St. Laurent and Kourou and along the two rivers, the Maroni and the Oyapok. The Creoles are the majority in the population. This majority is shrinking because of numerous immigrants from Haiti (30,000), and from Brazil or Surinam. They are attracted by the levels of pay, which are those of Europe.

The country has also to cater for other very diverse ethnic groups. The Amerindians, the Amerafricans and the Europeans who are working in the space station at Kourou. There is also a bustling minority of refugees from Asia.

There are three native priests in the whole church of French Guiana. There are seventeen Spiritans, who are the largest single group of religious. There are also three Fidei Donum priests, three Oblates and two Brothers of the Resurrection. The Sisters, of whom there are 75, do get a few vocations from among the people of the country.

The District concentrates its efforts on two objectives.

\* **First evangelization** of the Amerafrican peoples (the Bonis) and the Amerindians. This first evangelization which was relaunched in the 1970s is at the moment feeling the tonic effect of two - soon to be four - of our confreres from Nigeria. The arrival of these confreres brings a ray of hope for the future of the District.

\* **The re-evangelization** of the parishes, which for the most part are Creole. This is carried through a movement called "New Image of the Parish" which, having been adopted by the whole local church, is gradually becoming a "new image of the diocese". The putting in place of this movement at St. Laurent of the Maroni has been selected as one of the significant experiences for the Chapter.

The District would like to be able to work more closely with its two natural Regions, the West Indies and Brazil. It wishes also to find the men to be able to evangelize the Indians.

## 2:7.2 MARTINIQUE

This territory is simultaneously French and West Indian with strong island characteristics. Soon in fact it is going to be part of the "European" Community. Martinique is an overpopulated island, 1,080 square kilometers with 332,000 people, of whom there are 80,000 young people between the ages of 15 and 25. There is very great emigration to France. More than one-third of the total population is in Fort-de-France, the capital of the island.

The Church is based on a population which is 80% Catholic. The religion is of a very popular variety, easily drawn into the sects. The fall in the number of priests and their gradual aging has led the diocese to appeal more to the laity and to the setting up of what is called a "pastoral ministry of the locality", made up of small base Church communities.

The Spiritans, who since 1972 have no longer been responsible for the diocese, have moved out of positions of responsibility. These now are filled by diocesan priests who are native to Martinique. Today there are thirty members of the District with an average age of 68. There is a ray of hope, young people from Martinique have turned toward the Congregation.



### 2:7.3 GUADELOUPE

This island is the biggest of the French West Indies. Its 320,000 people are spread over 1,790 square kilometers. It has a rural economy giving rise to very great emigration to France.

The Church is able to draw upon a good group of native priests (29) who make up a clergy overall younger than that of Martinique. The population is 90% Catholic. Religious practice is rather traditionalist and is very open to the sects. Because of father-absence, the family unit does not exist, which means that the Church relies more on women than upon men. The bishop has about him an active group which sets up the small base church communities. So too the Spiritans are trying in turn to renew their own community life. This effort is largely based on regional community.

The fact that the personnel of the District has not been renewed for a long time will in the none too distant future cause the question of our continuing in the country to come up. The average age of the 28 Spiritans in Guadeloupe is 66.

### 2:7.4 Some conclusions

\* In all three cases **our continuing presence** in these countries is a question that comes up. Ought we to stay in these dioceses, once confided to the Congregation, where it is no longer possible or opportune to remain as too numerous a group? If the answer be yes, what is the best way for us to go on from here?

\* In many respects French Guiana is still a place of first evangelization. It has practically no native vocations. The coming of our confreres from Nigeria has in a way restarted this mission.

\* In Martinique two young people have come to the Congregation. Is this not a sign that we have still a role to play in these dioceses to help them to become missionary?

### 2:8 AFRICA

"Africa isn't a village" as one African confrere said, trying to put us on our guard against too simplistic a view, in which we generalize when talking about Africa and the Africans. After Asia, Africa is the most extensive continent in the world. Social and economic, political and religious realities are very different as between North and South, East and West Africa.

be new perspectives for the destiny of the continent. It is a balance-sheet in many respects disturbing, of economic decline, ever-spreading corruption and a lack of professional conscience, to cover only the things internal to these states.

Most African countries inherited at independence political systems that were foreign to the traditional organization of society. "States" had to be built in places where there were not yet nations. This led many countries to fall under the domination of oligarchies based on a single party system. Some who wanted to create an African socialism have also failed.

Today more than ever, the Church in Africa confronts the results of this situation, the poverty, the economic dependence, the oppression. The Church supports the drive for democracy which is springing into life, even though the outlines of the shape of things in the future remains vague.

"Our lands have been affected by a movement that is shaking the whole African continent violently", as the bishops of the Central African Republic stated. "Africa looks to democracy to be able to participate in its own future. It understands that it has with the whole of the planet, a common destiny, a new solidarity in the great march towards liberty and sharing" (Pastoral letter of the Bishops of the Republic of Central Africa, 1991).

The Church in Africa takes its place in this great ferment of ideas and of societies. Alongside the society which drags it in, the Church is subject to the contradictory drives of a traditional world that is disappearing and of a new world which is being built. It is searching for its identity and for cultural and spiritual maturity. It is determined, now more than ever, to find its own future for itself.

Is the Synod for Africa going to open up fresh approaches to help the continent get out of the dead-end and broaden the perspective for humanization and for full development? Mgr. Zoa, the Archbishop of Yaounde said "It is my hope that the synod will develop along these lines and will not start bandying arguments about theses".

## 2:8.1 Eastern Africa

### Introduction

The countries of the Region of East Africa - **Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda** - have certain things in common. They have the same languages, Swahili and English; they are geographically close; several of the ethnic groups who live there are of common stock. Nonetheless these countries are very different and have, since they got their independence, had great difficulty in coming together. Down the years several agreements for cooperation between them have had to be abandoned and the present economic climate does not favour remaking them. Moreover Kenya, the leading economy of the group, is at the moment going through a political shake-up where very strong opposition is standing against the authoritarianism of the President and the single party system.

However the Catholic churches by means of AMECEA, (the union of the Episcopal Conferences of East Africa) have on the whole had a happy experience of working together and have succeeded in some of their enterprises, like the Pastoral Institute of Gaba (in Uganda) for the training of leaders of Christian communities.

Several Churches of this Region have in the last few years passed the centenary of their evangelization. On these occasions the part that the Spiritans played in this part of Africa has been recalled, the beginnings of evangelization at Bagamoyo in Tanzania in 1868.

The Spiritan Districts of the Region - Kenya, Bagamoyo and Kilimanjaro - have had an effective working relationship since 1971, setting up the and launching the EAP (then the Foundation of East Africa). They, along with the whole Congregation, had the joy of seeing this Foundation reach the status of Province in 1989 (cf. 2.1.3).

We have put Ethiopia into this Region of Eastern Africa principally because it is nearby. The Spiritan presence there will be described in another place.

#### 2:8.1-1 BAGAMOYO

The District had 96 members at the beginning of the 1960s. Today there are only twelve, ten Brothers and two priests, all from the Province of Holland, working - four in parishes, one at the Diocesan Junior Seminary - in different activities - workshop, catechesis, secretariat of the bishop. Several of them, already past retirement, have chosen to remain on in Tanzania. In

February of 1992 the District was shocked by the sudden death of the Superior. The Spiritans of the District shared in the setting-up of the East African Province and recently again they have contributed to financing a new parish at Morogoro that will belong to this Province. With the decreasing numbers there is a question mark over the status of the group as a District.

### 2:8.1-2 KILIMANJARO

Most of the thirty members of the District of Kilimanjaro belong to the Province of USA East but the District includes a large number of confreres from other Provinces, Holland, France, East Africa and England. For several years now the District has welcomed lay associates, who at present number ten. Among them are Americans, Germans and Dutch. So **internationality** is a characteristic of this group. The members are working in different dioceses of Northern Tanzania, in Arusha, in Moshi, in Same and also in the island of Zanzibar.

The missionary priority of the group is first evangelization of the Maasai people, helping the development of the people and Justice and Peace, principally through education and health welfare. The flying medical service which covers all Northern Tanzania with its two airplanes must get mention too. The District also trains people as leaders of communities and as catechists. The District has accepted members of several Districts for their Overseas Training Programme (*stage*).

The relationship with the East African Province is excellent and during its recent Chapter the District of Kilimanjaro decided to go along the road of fusion with the Province of East Africa.

### 2:8.1-3 KENYA

The 63 Spiritans of Kenya District are working in 4 of Kenya's 18 dioceses, Nairobi, Mombasa, Machakos and Nakuru. A good number have already passed retirement age and decided to stay on in Kenya.

The missionary priorities of the group are St. Mary's College in Nairobi and the first evangelization initiative with the people of East Pokot, who are nomads living in the semi-desert regions of Central Kenya. This mission, which was undertaken about ten years ago, represents a new opening that is very interesting for the District.

Cooperation between the District and the East African Province continues today by an exchange of personnel. Several members of the East



African Province are working in Kenya and one confrere of the District is working with the Province at Kampala in Uganda.

#### **2:8.1-4      Some characteristics and challenges**

\* Tanzania is the only country in the Region which has a large Muslim community. Because of a policy that supports respect for different cultures and religious freedom, the policy called *ujamaa* which was adapted after independence, relations between the religions are harmonious in the country. But it is the explosion in the number of African evangelical and pentecostalist churches, notably in Kenya, that challenges the mission of the Catholic church. Ecumenic dialogue with Protestant churches which have large numbers of adherents in these three countries could also be stepped up.

\* The Districts of the Region have worked actively together since the beginning of the 1970s to found the East African Province. Since the Foundation became a Province in 1989, the Districts - which have remained as entirely independent circumscriptions within the territory - seem to find it difficult to work out a project in common with the new Province. Collaboration certainly continues through an exchange of personnel between the circumscriptions and through financial support given to the East African Province. An example of this would be the setting-up of home base parishes and projects. What is lacking however is a common project that would give dynamism to the entire Region. Another thing that would be of benefit to all concerned would be more frequent meetings between confreres who work in the same apostolate, for example those who are working in places of first evangelization.

\* In fact the principal challenge facing Spiritans of the Region is that of the relations between the circumscriptions. Looking at the present situation of Bagamoyo it seems to be difficult for this District to envisage union with the East African Province. The District of Kenya wishes to keep its independence. It would seem then that in the Region of East Africa the witness of a single united Spiritan group rests mainly with the members of the East African Province and the District of Kilimanjaro which together have taken the courageous course of fusion. This fusion, which should come to pass during the year 1992-1993, will mean that the District of Kilimanjaro goes out of existence and its members will be appointed to the East African Province.

## 2:8.1-5 Ethiopia

### Introduction

Since the fall of the marxist regime of **Haile-Mariam Mengistu**, in May 1991, Ethiopia has relative peace. Central power is now in the hands of the Tigrean army which does not have a sufficient control over Provinces where armed bands belong to the rival tribes cause violence and insecurity. The Province of Erithrea is going to decide about its future by a referendum next year.

The Spiritan presence in Ethiopia goes back to 1972. The two Spiritan groups (Sidamo and Gamu Gofa) work in different dioceses in the south of the country and in very different church situations. The Spiritans also have a presence in Addis Abeba the capital.

The Eastern Orthodox Church of Ethiopia (non-Calcedon) is the heir to the first Christian coming to Ethiopia in the 4th century. Of the 35 million inhabitants, 52% belong to this church. The Roman Catholic church is very small numerically (0.7% of the population) and has been in Ethiopia since the 16th century.

### 2:8.1-5.1 SIDAMO

This Group, started in 1972 by the Province of USA East and the District of Kilimanjaro, is in the Vicariate Apostolic of Awasa. Today there are three confreres, two from Holland and one from Nigeria. A second confrere from Nigeria has just been appointed. The ministry is a mission of **first evangelization** among the Borana, nomadic pastoralists, who live in the south of Ethiopia and count about 150,000 persons. The Borana of Ethiopia belong to a traditional religion and this is their first contact with Christianity. There is a representation of the Orthodox Church in the region and there are Lutherans in the town of Yavello.

There are two missions, Yavello and Doquolle. The first baptisms took place in 1981. Our confreres, besides the work of catechetics and the sacraments, are running two schools with boarding, something which makes it possible for the boys who live at a great distance to have an education. With the M.M.M. Sisters the confreres look after all the needs of the population particularly the water supply and health care. They also have a literacy campaign and serve as intermediaries between the Borana who have their own language and the government officers who speak Amharic. Recently our confreres have published a Borana dictionary.

The most urgent problem is the problem of personnel. We brought it up at the Enlarged General Council at Arusha which led to the commitment by the Province of Nigeria to Ethiopia.

The apostolic method of the group, particularly catechesis adapted for nomads has not always been understood by the local Church, something that has been a source of tension and even of conflict. Nonetheless relations have improved and are clearly better now.

## 2:8.1-5.2      **GAMU GOFA**

This group was founded by the Province of Ireland and has settled in the Vicariate Apostolic of Nekemte with six confreres from Ireland and one from France, seven in all, they are running five missions. The group is committed to the Ethiopian Orthodox church in a common drive for evangelization of the Hamar, a pastoral people totalling 22,000 persons. In mountain country working with the Orthodox consists in parish renewal, training of priests and deacons and the translation of liturgical texts. In addition each mission is deeply committed to the work of development by means of a programme of community development. This work is done in concert with the government.

Our confreres, using the Amharic alphabet, were the first to bring out written texts in the Hamar language. The publication of a Hamar dictionary is being worked at.

The **orientation towards ecumenism** of the group in Gama Gofa was first accepted by the local church but afterwards has been subject to numerous misunderstandings and conflicts with it. The story of discussions inside the group itself with the ordinaries of the Vicariate Apostolic of Nekemte and Roman Dicasteries (the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples) is described in this Report in the section on our commitments with ecumenism (cf. n. 4.4). The General Council has kept frequent close contact with the Group and has served as an intermediary principally on occasions when its very existence was called directly into question.

An overall picture of the apostolic work of the group of Gama Gofa will be presented to the General Chapter as a significant experience.

At Addis Ababa, where the Congregation has a *pied-à-terre*, a Spiritan Brother is the coordinator for all humanitarian aid services, the Christian Relief and Development Association (C.R.D.A.). In Addis Ababa too there is the Ethiopian branch of Concern Ireland founded by another Spiritan. Concern Ireland is an organization for international aid which is based in Dublin in Ireland.

## 2:8.2 French-speaking Central and West Africa

### Introduction

At the outset it was the quest for Spiritan vocations and the setting up of the Foundation of Central Africa that brought about close cooperation between Spiritan circumscriptions of the region of central Africa: Cameroon East, Congo, Gabon, R.C.A. and Yaounde. Senegal too opted for this Region because it is French-speaking, so it is one of the six founding circumscriptions of FAC. Recently Algeria has joined.

In the fields of politics, economics, society and culture the District of Senegal with the group in Algeria have very little in common with the lands of central Africa, and perhaps they could fit more comfortably into a Region of West Africa?

The Superiors of Zaire and of Angola have been attending the annual reunion of the principal Superiors of French-speaking Africa, which has been going on now for ten years. In the work of formation Angola and Zaire cooperate with FAC.

Finally, stretching things a bit, the District of Cape Verde has been added because of its geographical proximity to the District of Senegal, which already includes a Portuguese-speaking country, Guinea-Bissau.

The Churches of Central Africa, almost all of which have been established for a hundred years, have been playing a major role in the surge of democratisation, of liberation from dictatorial systems, a movement which has gripped almost the whole of Africa. They achieved this by leading the way towards a fundamental rethinking of the condition of their countries, the cross-roads that has been reached, the basic choices that must be made, the values to be upheld and the meaning of Christianity in Africa today. There have been many pastoral letters, declarations and proposals for catechesis from the bishops of Zaire, Cameroons, the Congo and the Republic of Central Africa.

The Churches, Catholic as well as Protestant, of Central Africa are very conscious of the role they are capable of playing in building an Africa of greater freedom and greater democracy and have committed themselves down this road with clear-sightedness and courage.



## **2:8.2-1 CAMEROONS**

### **2:8.2-1.1 YAOUNDE**

The Cameroons is the only country of Central Africa where Spiritans were not the first evangelisers. They are not therefore the founders of this church but they have been present since 1916. It is for this reason that Spiritans have enjoyed greater freedom than they do in other countries to take fresh approaches and map out new orientations, principally after the diocesan clergy had taken over in the dioceses of the south of the country.

In the 1960s Spiritans withdrew from the south to move north. First evangelisation is one of the main priorities of the District of Yaounde. This work drew the support of the Province of Nigeria two years ago, with a new implantation by the Province in this region of North Cameroons.

Another sector that calls for the attention of the District is the diocese of Bafia, the north of which remains a region of first evangelisation. The District wishes to maintain an active involvement in the great cities of Cameroon - in Douala and Yaounde where the Spiritans, according to Archbishop Zoa of Yaounde, could help to "transform the faith of the Christians into a missionary dynamism".

### **2:8.2-1.2 EAST CAMEROONS**

During the last six years Spiritans in the east have withdrawn from fifteen mission stations so as to foster community living and to redirect their missionary project to four ends as defined by the Chapter of the District in January 1992:

- first evangelisation for example, at Lomie, a project with the Baka people (this is to be one of the significant experiences for this General Chapter),
- youth ministry in the towns,
- the animation and the training of apostolic workers and committed laity,
- vocation animation.

This settling into a new line of action in the east was carried out in the setting of the uniting of the District with that of Yaounde.

### 2:8.2-1.3 Cameroons

Fusion with Yaounde was decided upon in January by the Chapter of East Cameroon. This coming-together was agreed to by the very great majority of the Spiritans of the District of Yaounde. The General Council decided that there will from the 2nd of October this year be only one Spiritan District serving the Church in Cameroons. A General Assembly of the Spiritans of Cameroons will be held at the beginning of October to work out in what way the new District is going to operate.

### 2:8.2-2 CONGO

The great missionary past of the Holy Ghost Fathers in this Church is well known. The dynamism of numerous Christian communities helped the whole society to face up to the doctrine of atheistic marxism. The people trust the Church to stand with them as they face a changing world. The marxist party which was in power recognised that it had to move towards a multiparty system.

In the Congo, as indeed everywhere, there is a return of the spiritual. Rejection of marxism nonetheless brings along with it a regrowth of sects.

There are three main thrusts in the missionary objectives of the Spiritan District:

- to go on founding Christian communities through first evangelisation;
- to maintain in certain centres a base parish in a city, to answer the evergrowing needs of evangelisation in the urban milieu and in order also to have somewhere to be able to stay, to meet and reflect together and to foster Spiritan vocations;
- to take up new ministries to those with the greatest needs: young people who are in difficulty and chaplaincies to prisons.

### 2:8.2-3 BANGUI (RCA)

The Republic of Central Africa, being **landlocked** is very dependent on other countries, something that worsens its poverty. It was evangelised later than the other countries and will celebrate its centenary later than the other Churches of the region.

In recent years vocations to the priesthood and the religious life have grown in number, there are many Congregations both of men and women

who are devoting themselves to accepting and forming their candidates. Strong points in church life are the small Christian communities in villages and local ones in towns, the training of lay people and their active involvement in church works. There exists a very great thirst for Christian training and instruction. For a number of years now many functionaries take part actively in the life of the Church and the training of the laity.

Spiritans who have always identified themselves with the great priorities of the whole Church in Central Africa are still working in three of the six dioceses: Bangui, Bangassou and Bambari.

What is appreciated about the Spiritans, is their **willingness** to take on localities or jobs for which the Central African Church has difficulty finding people. For example in rural zones, like Kemo Grebingui or Ippy, where there are Spiritans in the midst of populations that are poor and uncared for.

The **formation of laity** to take charge of Christian communities in villages or parts of towns, remains a priority of the Spiritans in the Republic of Central Africa.

They welcome young Central African priests into their communities when they come from the seminary, in order to initiate and live with them during the first years of their priesthood. Our willingness to answer the need for this sort of work was and is much appreciated.

Following the recall to their Province "of origin" of several confreres who were at the height of their activities, there is a two-sided problem that arises - how to cope with these recalls and how to cooperate with the native clergy at a crucial juncture where they were counting on us.

The coming of young confreres from FAC had a tonic effect and reset the links enabling the apostolate to the urban youth to be restarted.

Of seven bishops only two are Central Africans. The Church here has the feeling that it is very humiliating to watch expatriates still being appointed as bishops. Too many key positions are still in the hands of Spiritans.

## 2:8.2-4      GABON

Gabon, one of the first of these countries to be evangelised, nonetheless presents contrasts with the neighbouring ones, for if native bishops are leaders of four dioceses, the diocesan clergy on the other hand is quite small. Spiritans continue to be the mainstay of this Church.

The impression we get from the bishops is that it we who are still responsible for this Church. When we were on Visitation at the end of 1990 and early 1991 we asked the Bishops to **diversify their manpower**, which would give us the enrichment of working along with other different apostolic workers and also be enriching for the Church of Gabon. Up to this our request has come to nothing. Our confreres are gradually regrouping by sectors so they may be able as a community to take on the different missions. In order to do this they have worked out apostolic and community projects and for the first time it has been possible for the General Council to appoint two Nigerians for the apostolic and community project of Makokou in the diocese of Oyem.

The training of a laity capable of taking charge is something which preoccupies the confreres, as does finding and caring for vocations.

Two confreres have been appointed full time to work for the **continued training** and instruction of laity, religious, Sisters and diocesan priests. The Bishops, more conscious of immediate pastoral wants, do not appreciate the longterm usefulness of such undertakings. It may be that this team will develop an outreach to other countries in Central Africa where continued training is much sought after, the Bishop of Abong-Mbang for example has made an urgent request to us for it.

## 2:8.2-5      **SENEGAL (The District)**

Senegal is one of the most extended Districts of the Congregation covering Senegal, Mauritania, Guinea and Guinea Bissau. This diversity is a good thing, for it makes room for very different forms of mission to communicate and to exchange their good points. The obstacle created by distance is overcome to some extent by a planned disposition of delegates of the District Superior and of Spiritan houses throughout the Region.

### 2:8.2-5.1      **The State of Senegal**

Despite its poverty - being in the Sahel - Senegal is often cited as an example of a well-run democratic system of government. And yet it has been through periods of great tension with its neighbour to the north, Mauritania, over the frontier between the two countries, the Senegal river. It has had problems in the south with the demands for independence for Casamance.

Christianity is a minority religion (4 to 5%) within a strongly Muslim state, with its typical *confréries*. Five percent of the population belong to traditional religions. The Church is very well respected, not simply because



this is a lay state but for the way in which it lives at the heart of Senegalese life. There is a very active commission for Muslim-Christian relations.

Spiritan groups in Senegal maintain a balance between fitting **into the country areas** (small Christian communities living among a dominantly Muslim people), **the urban sectors** (Dakar) and in places of **first evangelisation** in eastern Senegal.

An audio-visual center has been opened at Saint Louis that also caters for documentation concerning the cinema. It is able to look after the entire Spiritan Region for such documentation and for training courses.

#### 2:8.2-5.2      **Mauritania**

This is a **Muslim republic** whose small Catholic community - consisting mainly of foreigners - has shrunk since the recent expulsion of many Negro Africans. The confreres have done tremendous work in the **mission in dialogue** and in development.

They would be happy to welcome young confreres to carry on the work. A Polish confrere has been appointed for the end of 1992. The diocese has plans for diversifying its personnel for the apostolate and is thinking perhaps of appealing to priests or lay people from the Middle East.

#### 2:8.2-5.3      **Guinea Conakry**

The Spiritans returned to Guinea in answer to an appeal from the Christians and Monsignor Sarah, the Archbishop of Conakry, after the fall of Sekou Touré. Six priests and three Brothers - nine confreres, are now working in the country, mainly in the area that runs from Kundara (first evangelisation) and Katako (Christian communities) to Conakry, where there is a plan for a Spiritan establishment.

#### 2:8.2-5.4      **Guinea Bissau**

Guinea Bissau, situated where the Muslim dominated countries end and with 54% of its population adhering to traditional beliefs, is a challenge to the missionary conscience of the churches.

Launching off from the mission to the Manjaques of Senegal, the Spiritans set up in 1979 in those people's home country, Guinea Bissau. In

an international community, seven confreres are serving the missions of Bajob, Caio and just recently Bissau.

Despite the uncertainties that so small a group feels, the Spiritan confreres have taken on the work of first evangelisation that calls for lots of time and patience.

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## 2:8.2-6 ALGERIA

The international Group in Algeria consists of one confrere from FAC, an American and four Frenchmen. They are a regional community in three *fraternités*, one in each major towns of western Algeria: Oran, Sidi Bel Abbas and Mascara. Meeting with the Muslims obviously is their main objective. This is undertaken through multiple shared endeavours and a solidarity with the tiny local church which consists mostly of foreigners and is enlivened by extreme diversity. There are Christians from Western and Eastern Europe, from the Middle East and from Sub-Saharan Africa. This Church of itself is disposed to dialogue. Each Spiritan *fraternité* looks after the pastoral care of the surrounding area. Solidarity links them with the world of the students. Solidarity operates by daily meetings with Algerians of all social and political categories. It does not need adding that this community is trying to live in the way of the Gospel and as intensively, all the tensions which over recent times have been agitating Arab countries and Algeria in particular.

## 2:8.2-7 CAPE VERDE

Spiritans have been working for fifty years in two of the ten islands of this archipelago. Initially the group contained Swiss and Portuguese confreres. There are now fifteen Portuguese confreres, who would like internationality in order to have a richer quality of pastoral service for this needy diocese.

The great majority of these people - the total population is 350,000 - have been baptized. There is a relative abundance of young women with vocations, but there are very few for the local clergy. Chronic drought and poor land lead to emigration which affects the young people.

A problem the District has to resolve is regionalization. If the continent of Africa is not far away, cultural differences do not make it easy to set up common projects. Up to the present the District has remained isolated. However during the Visit this year the General Council asked the Superior of the District to see about linking with Senegal where there are already Portuguese confreres working.

There are some Spiritan confreres of the Portuguese Province who come from the islands of Cape Verde. The District is thinking of taking advantage of the facilities of the main house to continue to welcome and accompany Spiritan vocations.

## **2:8.2-8            ZAIRE            :**

Zaire got in touch with the other Districts of Central Africa through looking to collaborate in training.

The former District of Kongolo changed its name in consideration of the very strong links between the District and the Foundation of Zaire and has become the District of Zaire.

Over thirty years, the number of Spiritans in the District has fallen from eighty (mainly Belgian and Dutch) to twenty-nine confreres who come from seven different circumscriptions. This international solidarity has given the District the capacity to reorient its missionary projects in order the better to serve the local Church.

The arrival and setting to work of members of the East African Province and of the Foundation of Central Africa, has demonstrated to the authorities of the local Church, that one of the advantages of a Spiritan Foundation is the promotion of mutual help and communion between Churches.

The events that have shaken Zaire in 1991-1992 have presented a particular challenge to missionaries. Individual confreres, because of the turn of events were obliged to leave the country for a while. Others decided, despite the pressure put upon them by the European governments and despite an uncertain future, to stay where they were. The greater part of those who were forced to leave came back quite soon in order to show their solidarity with the people of Zaire. This supportive presence was welcomed with great joy and has increased mutual esteem and given hope for the future.

"It is the moment for mission and not for flight" was the headline set by the bishops. Missionaries are conscious that the new situation puts the way they live and work to the question.

## **2:8.2-9            Angola (cf. Young Provinces 2:1.2)**

Angola, because of its links with FAC in Formation turned first to the Region of Central Africa. But the possibility of strengthening cultural, social

and economic links with Southern Africa has not been excluded; quite the contrary, because the Angolan Episcopal Conference is part of IMBISA (The Episcopal Conferences of Southern Africa).

## 2:8.2-10      **Some characteristics and challenges**

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Overall in these countries, where the process of growing democracy cannot be stopped, our confreres, like most of the ex-patriot missionaries, have difficulty sometimes in identifying where best they fit into this movement. This makes them very in talking about the political or social situation and how it influences the choices they make in their apostolic work. Circumstances and conditions of life are moreover very varied as between the District of Senegal or Algeria and Zaire and passing across the Congo or the Republic of Central Africa.

\* The preoccupation of the Spiritans, founders of most of the Churches of this region, had for a hundred years been to create and organise the Christian communities. Now the task is to "**deepen**" mission by helping Christians to become themselves true witnesses.

\* Throughout the region, Spiritans are redirecting their efforts in the local Churches by bringing out the **priorities of the Rule of Life** in dialogue with the bishops. In the contracts with the dioceses which they are trying to settle, they are on the look-out particularly for the following aspects of our mission:

- to go to places where there is first evangelization or regions that are abandoned or difficult (Yaounde, East Cameroons, Bangui, Congo, Senegal, Zaire);
- to respond to what community life asks of us and to set up pastoral teams (East Cameroons, Zaire);
- to move in the direction of mixed communities (of religious and of those who are not religious) or of intercultural communities (Congo, Bangui, Zaire);
- to accept parishes in urban centres giving priority to "marginalised youth" (Congo, Bangui, Yaounde). 56% of the population of Central Africa are below 25 years of age and are attracted into the towns;
- to start work in inculturation, taking into account the new urban cultures (Yaounde, Senegal);
- to train lay people for responsibility (everywhere);
- to create "Spiritans places" with the agreement and the approval of the bishops (East Cameroons, Bangui, Congo, Senegal);
- to arrange for these houses to be the property of the Congregation, so that the members of the Foundation of Central Africa who come from these countries, are going to have places to be their homes.



\* During recent years the bishops have taken a stand and have made a "preferential option" for the poor and the oppressed, challenging their own societies. This has enabled the Spiritans to set up in each circumscription an official service of **coordination for Justice and Peace**.

The first meeting of Spiritan Justice and Peace coordinators of the Region of Central Africa took place jointly with the reunion of the principal Superiors in November 1991.

\* Before FAC existed there were meetings of principal Superiors. The Foundation of Central Africa has given a new life to these meetings as indeed recently has the meeting of coordinators for Justice and Peace.

If dialogue and discussions continue about the way the missionary undertakings of the Districts are to go, then more and more shared enterprise should follow. A team for continued formation that would move about could be the next stage.

### 2:8.3 English-speaking West Africa

#### Introduction

The Superiors of this Region met in 1979 to consider the project for the West African Foundation; the WAF. Recently the Province of Nigeria and the founding Districts of the WAF got together about a further undertaking, the Spiritan International School of Theology (SIST).

The **Spiritan Region** of English-speaking West Africa today includes the countries and circumscriptions of: in Nigeria, the Province of Nigeria, the Districts of Kwara Benue and of Makurdi; in the Gambia, Sierra Leone and Ghana (one Spiritan District in each of these countries), and the Foundation of West Africa which is supported by the Districts of Gambia, of Makurdi, of Sierra Leone and of Ghana.

The economic climate has not made it easy for these countries over the last few years. Ghana and Sierra Leone in particular have had extremely difficult times even though the situation in Ghana is improving rapidly.

Political evolution goes ahead quite calmly in the Gambia and in Ghana. Nigeria, following a long period of military regimes, at the moment is going through the evolution to democracy. Some places, notably Wakari where our confreres are working, are experiencing violent periods and tense times. Liberia's civil war flowed over and was fought in northern regions of Sierra Leone and the dioceses of Kenema where the Spiritans are working suffered the damaging consequences.

### 2:8.3-1 THE GAMBIA

The small community of Christians, 20,000 people in this overwhelmingly Muslim country, has an impact on society that is far beyond what its numbers would merit, principally through its many schools which are open to everybody. 85% of the population is Muslim, from a total population of 800,000. The presence of Islam has become more obvious over recent years but relations between Christians and Muslims remain in harmony and peace.

The diocese of Gambia now can count on six priests, all recently ordained and on eight seminarians. This is the fruit of a persevering work in the pastoral care of vocations, with which the Spiritans - who remain the majority of the priests in the country, twenty including a bishop - are still persevering.

Besides schools and parishes, the group's priorities are: for the pastoral center for training Christian community leaders and catechists; for the family and for youth.

The District of Gambia took an active role in the creation of WAF. The novitiate of this Foundation was at Bwiam, a mission in the up country, before it went to Ejisu in Ghana. There are now several Gambians members of the WAF. Up until 1990 the Superior of WAF lived in Gambia.

### 2:8.3-2 GHANA

It was Spiritans who had been expelled from Biafra who started our work in Ghana in 1971. When they first came, they decided to direct their efforts into the more missionary parts of parishes in the diocese of Kumasi which had extended a welcome to them. The people of Ghana are very attached to their culture. This fact explains why very particular attention has to be paid to questions touching the role of the chief and the place that marriage, the family and the rites of burial hold, in the way that pastoral work is addressed.

Another priority of the group from the time that it arrived has been movements for young people and also, by means of the schools and through youth centres, the search for vocations. As the years went by and with the support of the bishop of Kumasi who had always encouraged diocesan and religious vocations, the confreres have had the satisfaction to see the number of Ghanaian Spiritans increase to such a point that they now are the largest group within the WAF (cf. Foundation of West Africa 2.2.2.).

The number of men in the District has fallen from twenty three in 1986 to fourteen in 1992, with three of them outside Ghana. These facts raise the question of the future and of the District's relationship with the Foundation.

### **2:8.3-3      SIERRA LEONE**

The 66,000 Catholics of Sierra Leone represent only 3% of the country's population, while Islam accounts for 45% of the population, other Christian denominations 7% and people of traditional religion, particularly in the north of the country, make up 45%. The beneficial effects of the Church's work through schools and development projects have come through in relationships between Muslims and Christians which are peaceful and harmonious.

The Spiritan District, with its 37 confreres, 1 bishop, 1 Brother and 35 priests, is young - with an average age of 47 - and constitutes the greater part of the clergy of the two dioceses in which we are working. There are already 30 diocesan priests and 47 seminarists in the major diocesan seminary which is regional and serves for Gambia, Sierra Leone and Liberia. This seminary which is directed by a Spiritan had to be transferred recently from Liberia into Sierra Leone.

The civil war crossed the frontier from Liberia and at the moment there are 150,000 refugees in Sierra Leone and many displaced families in the upcountry. This dramatic situation now absorbs the attention and energy of the Church in Sierra Leone.

The District of Sierra Leone is a founding member of the WAF and organizes a postulancy where Spiritan vocations are welcomed. There is now one Spiritan priest, five young men in Formation and six novices from Sierra Leone.

Amongst the District's activities we have to point out the mission of first evangelisation with the Kissi people in the diocese of Kenema and also the Kenema Pastoral Center.

### **2:8.3-4      KWARE-BENUE (Nigeria)**

The District of Kwara-Benue has nine confreres, all from the Province of Canada, and covers the same territory as the two dioceses of Idah and Lokoja. These two dioceses have 100,000 Catholics from a total population of 2.5 million. The two major tribal groups from this part of Nigeria, the

Igbirra and the Igala are strongly Muslim but the other peoples belong to traditional religion.

The confreres are keeping up their work of collaborating with the local Church which they helped to found. The District while it remains fully an independent circumscription, chose to cooperate with the Province of Nigeria rather than with WAF in the pastoral care of vocations and in the training of young Spiritans.

## **2:8.3-5      MAKURDI (Nigeria)**

In the early days the confreres were working only in the diocese of Makurdi which then gave this District its name. A little more than ten years ago however, they accepted the invitation of the bishop of a neighbouring diocese, Yola, and they have followed the movement of the Tiv people into this diocese. The territory of the District now covers the two dioceses of Makurdi and Yola. Most of the confreres are from the English Province, but there are some also from Ireland and one from Trinidad. More recently members of the WAF have come to bring new blood into the District.

Since the beginning of the 1970s the Church has experienced a remarkable surge in the diocese of Makurdi. At the moment there are 400,000 Catholics which is 10% of a population of 4 million and there are 54 parishes. The first priest that belonged to the diocese was ordained in 1971. Now there are more than 100. The major tribal group, the Tiv, is known for its resistance to Islam. In the southern part of the diocese the Idoma people belong to traditional religions and there are missions amongst them of first evangelisation.

That is how at the end of the 1970s the Spiritans of the District started work in the diocese of Yola. This diocese now has 114,000 Catholics and 30 diocesan priests. The confreres are running a Pastoral Center for the training of lay people and are responsible for four parishes. In the Region of Wukari there have recently been dramatic events, when following a conflict between the ethnic groups, a great number of their parishioners, who were Tiv, have fled the region to move towards the west.

It is planned that two parishes now under the responsibility of the confreres of the District should eventually be taken over by the WAF. WAF at the moment has four priests who originate from this region of Nigeria as well as twelve young men in training. The District welcomes young people into the Spiritan postulancy at Yola for a year before sending them to the novitiate of WAF at Ejisu in Ghana.



## 2:8.3-6      **Some characteristics and challenges**

\* Since a major Superior for WAF was appointed in March 1992, the Superiors of the Districts concerned no longer bear the direct responsibility of the Foundation. The only common project of size in the region is therefore the scholasticate for theology, the SIST, which cares for the young men in the Second Cycle from the Province of Nigeria and from WAF (cf. 2.1.1. Province of Nigeria).

\* This project is really important and that for more than one reason. In the first place in the training of young Spiritans and then also as a meeting place for all Spiritans of the Region. The growing numbers of confreres from Nigeria and WAF makes the improvement in relations and collaboration between the circumscriptions of the Region ever more urgent.

\* With the increase of native clergy and pastoral agents belong to the Churches of the region, we have constantly to re-evaluate our missionary projects, so they should always remain in line with what our Rule of Life asks of us and so that we should be able to respond to the true needs of the churches where we are working.

\* All the countries of the region bear traces of a strong presence of Islam which is becoming politicised and more fundamentalist. Relations between Muslim and Christian sometimes are good, for example in Gambia and Sierra Leone, sometimes very strained and even violent, as in Nigeria. Dialogue between Christian and Muslim is certainly a real challenge for the entire region.

\* On the other hand people of traditional religion who live in the region, those of the central region of Nigeria, of the north of the Gambia, the Kissi and the other peoples of Sierra Leone, are at the moment gradually becoming disposed towards Christian belief. Here we are seeing a situation of "*kairos*" which cries out to us to become involved.

\* Some of the Circumscriptions of the Region are looking at the possibility of a fresh start as missionaries in a French-speaking neighbouring country.

## 2:8.4   **Southern Africa**

### **Introduction**

As a Spiritan Region, Southern Africa is still in gestation. The District of South Africa, and the different groups in Malawi, in Zambia and in Zimbabwe have contacted each other in order to set up a Region.

The political situation and the antagonism between the Republic of South Africa (RSA) and the other countries makes communication and effective collaboration in this Region very difficult. The gradual abandonment of apartheid is making it possible for these countries to draw closer together.

The different circumscriptions did not manage to prepare together for the Enlarged General Council at Arusha in 1989 nor to choose a delegate for that occasion. Nonetheless the way they welcome Spiritan vocations has lead to the different groups working closely together and to the Foundation of Southern Africa (cf. 2.2.6).

It is for this reason the General Council took the initiative in conformity from the mandate received from the General Chapter of 1986 and has been trying to promote Regionalization for Southern Africa. The first meeting of the Superiors concerned, set up by the General Council, took place in December 1991.

#### **2:8.4-1 SOUTHERN AFRICA** (cf. also the Foundation of Southern Africa, 2.2.6)

It was with the release from prison of Nelson Mandela in 1990 that there began the process that will enable the majority black population progressively to acquire the same statute before the law and the same rights as the white population. The abolition of apartheid was ratified by a referendum of the 17th of March last. This will have the effect of very deep change at all levels of the society: politics, social life and economics.

Little by little the District has changed in appearance. For a long time it was staffed by German confreres and was concentrated in the single diocese of Bethlehem. Today confreres from six Provinces "of origin" are working there. The District's missionfield has spread out into the Kingdom of Lesotho and then the Province of Natal where the Congregation has been able to set up a Formation house (Laval House in Pietermaritsburgh) answering at the same time an appeal from the Archbishop of Durban who asked us to collaborate in the Hostels. This is the Durban Project and consists in offering pastoral care to the migrant workers who come from the homelands and from distant regions and who live in inhuman conditions in these Hostels. The project also envisages setting up Christian communities for mutual help; training lay people in responsibility for these Christian communities and establishing relations just as much with the local parish as with that of the country of origin of these migrant workers. There are great difficulties in getting it started and the project is finally now under weigh. Two young confreres, one from Portugal and one from England have arrived and a further English confrere has just been appointed.

**2:8.4-2 MALAWI**

Six confreres, five Irish Province and one from TransCanada, make up this group which is linked with the Province of Ireland. They are working in two dioceses in the pastoral care of parishes, formation work in a junior seminary and pastoral work for the numerous refugees from Mozambique. There are also works of development and for Justice and Peace. It is primarily from Malawi that there is an influx of vocations now in the countries of the region. Five candidates are in formation in Southern Africa. The WAF has chosen Malawi as one of its missionary projects and two confreres from WAF have received their First Appointments to join the Malawi Group making it even more international. This is the reason why perhaps one has to think of looking again at the status of this group.

Last March the eight Catholic bishops of Malawi vigorously denounced the presidential abuse of power and the single party system which the President controls. For this courageous action they received a day's imprisonment but their gesture had the merit of drawing the attention of the world press to this country and to the dominant group's attacks upon democracy.

**2:8.4-3 ZIMBABWE**

This group depends on the Province of Nigeria, which sent its first missionaries to the diocese of Mutari in 1984. In 1989 the first confrere to come from the Foundation of Southern Africa received his appointment to the group in Zimbabwe. At present eight confreres work in four parishes and two are waiting for visas. Since the Visitation by the General Council, it is envisaged that the status of the Group will advance to Circumscription in the sense of the Rule of Life.

**2:8.4-4 ZAMBIA**

Confreres from Ireland who had left Nigeria arrived in 1971. In an effort shared with the East African Province and going back to 1978, the Group has become international and became an International Group in 1982. There are now twelve confreres working there in two dioceses, Monze and Livingstone, eleven of them are from the Province of East Africa and one is Irish. The dioceses are situated in the most poverty stricken parts of the country. There are but few native clergy in these diocese.

One Dutch and one Irish confrere are working in a refugee camp.

There had been a group in Zambia working in the diocese of Solwezi, directly dependent on the Province of Nigeria. Failing to arrive at an accord with the diocesan bishop, the Province of Nigeria recalled these men and wound up its engagement in the diocese.

#### **2:8.4-5      Some characteristics and challenges**

\* The overall economic and socio-political situation in this region is the result of;

- tensions existing in each place and between each place and the Republic of South Africa caused by the policy of apartheid,
- the economic preponderance of the Republic of South Africa,
- war in Mozambique and in Angola.

The Catholic Churches in the different countries have in IMBISA a platform for working together. Are they going to succeed alongside other Christian denominations in drawing up a new and non-racial scenario of Southern Africa for their people?

\* Independent African Churches are everywhere and Pentecostalist groups seem to be characteristic of the entire region. This is a challenge to the Catholic church particularly in the field of ecumenism and inculturation.

\* The appointment by IMBISA of one of our confreres to the pastoral care of refugees, and then the Durban project, two regional initiatives spread over more than a single diocese or a single country, are real region-wide initiatives. They correspond also to the missionary objectives that are defined in the Spiritan Rule of Life.

\* One of the Region's preoccupations is welcoming and forming Spiritan candidates and setting up the necessary structures to do this well.

\* The meeting of December 1991 at Blantyre in Malawi was already a step forward. Everybody said that they were in favour of a Regional collaboration.

\* From the fact that three of the four groups in the Region will be working more and more with confreres who come from the southern hemisphere, means that they do not have at their disposal the resources that those that come from the northern hemisphere do. Solidarity and mutual support at the material level are envisaged.



## 2:9 THE INDIAN OCEAN

### Introduction

This area of the south west Indian Ocean extends from the Seychelle Islands, in the north, to the Comoros and to Madagascar in the south. The Mascarene Islands, Mauritius, Reunion and Rodriguez make a geographic unit in the east of the area. Although they may be close in geography these islands differ considerably from each other, in their peoples' story, their present political status and their various fortunes over recent decades. Communications and business between them is developing rapidly, pulling them together and creating a sort of union over the area.

From the Catholic church's point of view, inter-island contacts are growing. Contacts between church movements and religious communities as well as frequent exchanges at the level of church life cross the borders between the local churches and bishop's conferences. This applies specially to the Spiritan Districts of Madagascar, Mauritius and Reunion. Here one of the most important developments of the last ten years has been the coming into being of the Foundation of the Indian Ocean (FOI), (cf. 2.2.3.).

For our Congregation these islands are historically important - Father Laval in Mauritius, Mgr Alexandre Monnet one of the first bishops in Madagascar and Father Levavasseur in Reunion. Our numbers there have dropped greatly in recent years, from 124 in 1980 to 80 in 1991.

### 2:9.1 MADAGASCAR

Madagascar is the giant of the southwest Indian Ocean, for its size, its eleven million inhabitants, important mineral deposits and agriculture. It has unfortunately been passing recently through a deep political crisis, with a consequent recession which has had dramatic results for the people of the country and for the entire region. The country finds itself in a deadend at the moment because the structures that the former opposition group - now "the living forces of the country" - tried to set up are not in fact running the country and have not succeeded in dislodging the President, sitting it out in his palace and kept safe by his guard since ever the crisis broke.

The confreres of this District have been successful in maintaining solidarity with the suffering of the Malagasy people, choosing a simple life style close to that of the people themselves. There are 38 Spiritans with an average age of 59. A significant evidence of this commitment is the foyer NRJ called *Energie* situated in a very poor suburb of Tananarive. It is a sign that speaks clearly. This welcome center for young delinquents offers settled

surroundings and solid training to these young people in order to prepare them to fit into society.

The **Formation of people** to take responsibility in the local church and the **first evangelisation** of the Sacalav people on the West coast, figure among the principal tasks of the District. The District is moreover one where there have been particularly good results from the regional communities. The District has asked for the help of FAC for the work of first evangelisation.

Amongst happenings that should be noted are the celebration in 1987 of 90 years of Spiritan presence in the diocese of Mahajanga. There was also the ceremony for transferring the remains of the first missionaries to "the ancestral tomb" in the courtyard of the archbishop's house. These two events are specially noteworthy. Mgr. Razafindratandra wanted to impart a Christian meaning to a tradition very dear to the Malagasy, the cult of ancestors. In this way the first missionaries from now on are "ancestors" in the faith of the Christian community of Mahajanga.

## 2:9.2 REUNION

Reunion enjoys the status of an overseas *département* of France and has a standard of living and material well-being that is comparable to the western world. All the same the disturbances at the beginning of 1991 are the sign of a certain disquiet in Reunion society. This uneasiness touches the way it is linked with the French homeland. The majority of the population is still, nonetheless, firmly attached to France.

The Spiritans of Reunion, who total 28 with an average age of 65, still occupy an important role in the local Church. The works are parish renewal, chaplaincy to the *lycée*, audio visual work, permanent formation and animation of the First Cycle of studies in the diocesan seminary.

## 2:9.3 MAURITIUS

The Island of Mauritius which gave itself the status of a republic in 1992 has had ten years of political stability and considerable economic development (a free-trade zone and the tourist industry) and in this way has been able to mop up unemployment and attain a higher standard of living. This economic growth has been founded on very cheap labour and upon the goodwill of overseas investors and therefore still remains fragile.

As in Reunion, the Spiritans of Mauritius (fourteen, with an average age of 60) continue their work within the local church in parishes, catechetical animation and in permanent formation. The tomb of **Father**

**Laval** at Sainte Croix continues to be an important place of pilgrimage and spiritual *ressourcement* for thousands of Christians and believers of other religions.

The *Centre d'Accueil de Saint-Michel* at **Pont-Praslin** has developed a great deal over the course of recent years. It has become a true place of exchange which facilitates meeting and dialogue between those with faith in various religions, as well as a deep reflection upon those religions themselves. The work being done at this Center will be presented to the General Chapter as a significant experience.

Among outstanding happenings we must mention the nomination of **Mgr Maurice Piat**, a Spiritan, as coadjutor bishop to Cardinal Margéot.

#### **2:9.4 The Districts of the Indian Ocean and the Indian Ocean Foundation (FOI)**

The three Districts have been putting great efforts into FOI, supplying personnel for formation and administration, financing, building the houses of formation, accompanying the candidates and welcoming the members of the Foundation. The confreres are sharing in the life and the mission of the members of the FOI. It is the Foundation really that has created the unitedness of these three Districts, in themselves so different and which could push them to greater collaboration still.

#### **2:10 OCEANIA (Australia and Papua New Guinea)**

##### **Introduction**

The commitment of Spiritans in Oceania closed the circle of the globe for the Congregation's mission, adding the sixth continent to our field of activities. There had been intermittent contact with Spiritans there over 150 years. One of the first groups at the time of Father Libermann was sent on mission to what is now West Australia. Difficulties with the bishop of the place forced the group to withdraw. A school which the Congregation founded at Ballarat in 1870 was handed over later to the Irish Christian Brothers.

At present Spiritans are working in two countries of this region, in Australia and in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

## 2:10.1 AUSTRALIA

The world's largest island and fifth largest country is but sparsely populated. The majority of the population, of which Catholics make up one third, are immigrants or children of immigrants.

With its natural resources and dynamic people, Australia belongs from the standpoint of the economy more properly with "The North". It is trying at present to draw closer to the Asian countries of the Pacific.

The Spiritan group, eleven confreres work there, depends upon the Province of Ireland and has received reinforcements during recent years. The Congregation now is established in the dioceses of Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. In this last city Spiritans now have a house to welcome candidates and to discern vocations. The first Australian Spiritan candidate is in Papua New Guinea at present on his period of pastoral experience (OTP).

## 2:10.2 PAPUA NEW GUINEA

PNG has maintained a democratic style of government, unlike many other old colonies that have achieved their independence.

Two Spiritan groups - one depends on the Province of Ireland and has two confreres, the other on TransCanada and has nine confreres - are working in this country of three and a half million inhabitants and 700 different languages. PNG is considered to be the most diversified, from the linguistic point of view, region of the world.

Catholics are one third of the population. Most are Christians of the first generation, because the gospel did not reach their villages until after the second world war. Mission mainly in the diocese of Aitape has been developing considerably over the last six years. Confreres on their First Appointments, coming from TransCanada and FOI have raised the numbers and broadened the international character of the group. The infusion of youth into the group has increased interest in local cultures, in the development of indigenous liturgy, in the organization of an audio-visual programme for the diocese and a new thrust to bring the gospel into regions that are difficult to reach. The area being cared for by the mission has been enlarged in answer to a appeal from the neighbour diocese of Wewak.



### 2:10.3 Some characteristics and challenges

\* In practice there are three little groups which started their mission, each group in its own place. As time went by they worked out a certain exchange. They have elected one delegate for all to the General Chapter.

\* Several years ago the confreres in Australia and the two groups in PNG had thought to establish a circumscription of Oceania in order to look for Spiritan vocations. It has up to this been a plan that is hard to realize.

\* There are vocations in Australia. There are young men who are interested in the Congregation in Papua New Guinea. A Formation programme has been initiated but the lack of qualified personnel seems to counsel prudence. The Group considers that the moment to create Formation structures reserved to the Congregation has not come but that what has to be done is to follow up the different vocations and to help in discernment and orientation.

\* The relations which these two countries have with Asia must be kept in mind if a greater opening on the part of the Congregation towards the Asian continent is still envisaged.

### 2.11 ASIA

The Superior General in his report to the General Chapter in 1986 insisted that the Congregation had to move towards Asia. He recalled that a real appeal had been made to us that we should take part in the mission of the Church in Asia even if we do not see clearly in what way it should be done.

Six years later, what is the situation of the Congregation in Asia? Since 1986 our numbers in **Pakistan** have been reinforced. It has become more international (see below). Moreover through the *Centre d'Accueil Saint-Michel* of **Port-Praslin** in **Mauritius**, the Congregation is now doing something, even if in only a small way, to dialogue with the world of **Hinduism**. The question of a **new undertaking in Asia by the Congregation** has several times come up for discussion in the General Council and in the Spiritan Research and Animation Team (SRAC) at the Generalate, which carried out an enquiry on the topic. We have not been able to move forward with this project because the situation was not yet ripe. In fact we had not received any definite request from one particular Church.

## 2:11.1 PAKISTAN

The Spiritan move into Pakistan goes back to 1977. The experience that some confreres who have been there since the outset have accumulated is now becoming precious. In the course of these last six years, the number of the group has gone up and it is more international now in character. It has had the benefit of four First Appointments (one each from Ireland and Poland, two Mauritians of the Foundation of the Indian Ocean). There are 10 members. Two confreres, one Irish and one French, have done their missionary stage with this group.

The group continues to be responsible for parishes, Sukkur in the diocese of Hyderabad and Rahim Yar Khan in the diocese of Multan. For the greater part these Christian communities are Punjabis who, in a society that is massively Muslim, are marginalized because of their Christianity but also because of the menial street sweeping work that is reserved to them. Our commitment, in collaboration with the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of our Lady, to the Marwari Bhils, who are even more marginalized than the Punjabis, means that the Spiritans now are providing several days' attention each week in several of the villages where they meet the Marwari Bhils.

The group in Pakistan is characterised by a strong community life which allows for regular evaluation of the work in course and for a simple way of living close to the poor. Spiritans have decided not to accept Spiritan vocations for the moment, in this way fostering the build-up of vocations for the diocesan clergy.

The work of the group in Pakistan will be presented as a significant experience to the General Chapter.

## 2:11.2 Questions and challenges

\* On balance the Spiritan presence in Pakistan over 15 years has proved positive. Things augur well for the future, because the group is young with an average age of 39.9. The group is also well settled in. These two facts will make it capable in the course in the coming years of facing the fundamental question which has been left waiting till now: dialogue with Islam.

\* **The Congregation's commitment in Asia**, while it is a fact, has remained very tiny. And still in the encyclical *Redemptoris missio* Pope John Paul II recalls that commitment in Asia should be a missionary priority "*ad gentes*" for the Church over the years that are coming (*R.M.* 37; *cf.* 1.7.1). In order to respond to this challenge which is also an appeal, should we just be content with sending reinforcements to Pakistan and to the Pont-Praslin project on the island of Mauritius? Is the Spirit not moving us to "enlarge the

place of our tent" (Is 54:2) and to commit ourselves resolutely down the road towards opening a new mission in Asia?

\* We should like the General Chapter to give some pointers on this topic.  
/ Could not the present opening of the Congregation towards the laity provide an occasion for looking over this missionary option for Asia in a new light?

## PART THREE

### THE CONGREGATION:

#### MAIN DIRECTIONS AND POSSIBILITIES

##### 3:0 INTRODUCTION

This survey of Spiritan life across six continents and our 67 circumscriptions brings home to us the different aspects of our Spiritan life and activity throughout the world. We exemplify the various facets of our Spiritan charism as we live out missionary experiences and practise the religious life, in our various ways. A creative loyalty to our Founders and the living tradition of our Institute help us to live this diversity in unity. The face of the Congregation is in the process of changing as a result of the decrease in vocations in the Northern Hemisphere and the decrease in personnel in the Districts (historically tied to the Provinces of the North), and of the strong growth of Spiritan vocations in the Southern Hemisphere. Our Congregation, which hitherto has been predominantly European and North American is becoming increasingly diversified.

In this third part we wish to draw attention to some trends and possibilities which emerge from the life of the Congregation. Three trends seem to us important: **solidarity in working together; Justice and Peace; the inculturation of the Christian message and of Spiritan life.** We also want to share with you some thoughts **about lay Spiritans, about first and continuing formation and about the future of the Brothers in our Institute.**

##### 3:1 SOLIDARITY IN WORKING TOGETHER

A decentralised Congregation such as ours permits a diversity of missionary activities - according to the needs of the Mission and the character of the local Churches - and a legitimate inculturation of our religious life. More and more we feel the need for channels of communication and exchange. We could be mutually enriched through this diversity, strengthened in our apostolic commitment and in our Spiritan life at the service of this commitment to provide mutual help in combined apostolic projects.



### 3:1.1 Solidarity in working together regionally

In the foregoing pages we have presented the circumscriptions as they form together a Spiritan region. Practically speaking, all circumscriptions with the exception of a few for reasons of geographical isolation, form part of a region and participate regularly in regional meetings which become special occasions for fostering solidarity: solidarity in taking up the challenge posed by certain shared missionary issues: for Europe, reception of migrants; for North America, commitment to Mexico.

Without a doubt the regional meetings of the Superiors of the circumscriptions provide the best occasions for this co-operation; but so do the other regional meetings which are on the increase, such as those of formators, mission animators, co-ordinators of Justice and Peace programmes, Bursars, etc.

The exchange of information between regions is important. This entails writing for interprovincial publications: "*Pentecôte sur le Monde*" for France, Switzerland and Belgium; "*Spiritans*" for Transcanada and the U.S. West; a pamphlet on the Congregation brought out by Spain in understanding with the hispanic countries where we have works; exchanges of information through the bulletins of the various circumscriptions; participation in each others' chapters, according to proximity or by virtue of a historic connection, of Superiors of circumscriptions or their delegates.

Further on (4:3) regionalization will be treated more explicitly. For the present, we think we can safely say that the Regions will be expected to play an ever increasing role in the years to come: for some European and American Provinces, this solidarity and collaboration is a question of life, just as it is for some of our more recent Foundations.

### 3:1.2 Solidarity through the Enlarged General Council

Our Rule of Life (n. 206) makes provision for a meeting of at least an Enlarged General Council in the interval between two General Chapters to check on the implementation of the decisions of the General Chapter, to examine new means of ensuring and realising the objectives of the Congregation and to strengthen collaboration between various circumscriptions and with the General Council. Thus, an important aspect of the Enlarged Council is to provide solidarity at two levels: between circumscriptions on the one hand and, on the other, between circumscriptions and the General Council.

In the opinion of those who participated, the Enlarged General Council which met at Arusha (Tanzania) in 1989 was an important occasion

for fostering solidarity and a meeting of minds on certain questions concerning the General Chapter, the Foundations and the new Provinces and their relationship with the Districts. For some of the participants at Arusha, the meeting was an eye-opener concerning the impact of the Foundations on the Congregation.

The participants were especially impressed by the willingness to listen and the desire for mutual understanding which allowed the expression of certain claims and of certain frustrations hitherto left unexpressed in meetings at this level. This constituted a breakthrough in the area of collaboration and of solidarity (cf. n. 77 of *Spiritan News*, May-July 1989 for further details on the Enlarged General Council).

### **3:1.3 Solidarity by means of International Meetings**

In recent years we have organized international Spiritan meetings between people engaged in the same kind of apostolic activity who wished to examine their work in the company of others, or between those sharing similar responsibilities in the Congregation. These meetings were held in response to requests which had been made to us or to fulfil needs of which we ourselves were aware. We will talk more specifically about these meetings in n. 4.10. Here we simply want to allude to the importance of such meetings for Spiritans not in positions of responsibility within the Congregation and who thus do not participate regularly in international Spiritan meetings (such as those for Superiors of a region, for Bursars, for formators or for new Major Superiors at Rome). By means of these meetings contacts are established, connections made, enduring links are forged and partnerships formed.

### **3:1.4 Solidarity and Mutual Help in Personnel**

For a long time the Congregation has proceeded on the understanding that there will be close collaboration between a Province and the Districts dependent on it in matters of personnel. Our Rule of Life constantly underlines this fundamental connection between the individual Spiritan and his Province of origin (n. 160.2) to the extent that the Provinces sometimes feel that the solidarity envisaged by the Rule of Life is a little too onesided. Besides this form of solidarity another has developed in the Congregation: in recent years several Provinces have consented to provide personnel for groups or Districts where hitherto they were scarcely or not at all represented. Thus, certain Districts which traditionally were under the aegis of a particular Province have become more and more international. Where previously two or three nationalities were to be found, today there can be

as many as seven or eight and sometimes even ten nationalities in a group of about sixty confreres.

The following table gives the situation of some of the Districts which best illustrate this internationality in the three years 1974, 1989 and 1992:

District of the Congo:

1974	105 Members	3 nationalities
1989	50 members	4 "
1992	44 members	7 nationalities

District of Senegal:

1974	111 members	6 nationalities
1989	74 members	7 "
1992	62 members	10 nationalities

(At the end of this year, this will become 11 with the arrival of a Brazilian confrere.)

Southern Africa:

1974	28 members	1 nationality
1989	24 members	5 nationalities
1992	22 members	7 nationalities

Other examples could be cited in Angola, Zaire and Mexico.

This solidarity has been made possible through **first appointments**, thanks at one and the same time to the policy of the General Council and to that of the Provinces which were willing to help other circumscriptions.

The phrase "through first appointments" is used since subsequent appointments are at the discretion of the Provinces and the other circumscriptions. The General Council does not have authority over these latter appointments, other than in exceptional cases provided for in n. 159 of the Rule of Life, where the Superior General can move a confrere from one circumscription to another following on a quadripartite agreement (between the person and the three Superiors concerned).

A general administration which has authority only over first appointments in the distribution of personnel finds its hands are often tied when it comes to responding to the urgent requests for personnel for formation in the new Provinces and Foundations. The same is true for the International Groups which depend directly on the General Council (Pakistan, Ethiopia (Sidamo), Zambia, Paraguay, Algeria, Mexico). On the other hand, the more international the groups become, the more they are inclined to have recourse to the General Council for personnel.

Apart from this consideration, we wish to underline the great solidarity shown by the older Provinces which have agreed to respond to the

new missionary challenges laid down by countries where traditionally they were not represented; the same holds true for the new Provinces and Foundations.

In the years ahead, the multicultural character of the circumscriptions and communities is going to increase. This is a challenge which the Congregation is called upon to confront at the end of four centuries of its existence. If this challenge is taken up in Spiritan communities, through the way they live and work, they will be bearing an important witness: it is also one that the Church has a right to expect of us.

### 3:1.5 Solidarity in financial matters

This important aspect of solidarity in the Congregation will be dealt with in the General Bursar's report. Here we emphasize two points only:

- there is more sharing within circumscriptions: many have set up a mutual aid fund to bring about a more equitable distribution of resources. Some confreres were financially supported by their Province of origin, while other confreres of the same Province did not enjoy this benefit. To end this inequality, **funds** have been set up to distribute this assistance in an equitable fashion between everyone, no matter what his Province of origin and financial situation;
- a special "**Solidarity for Justice**" fund was established by one Province and put at the disposal of the Justice and Peace Service of the General Council to help those circumscriptions which lack the resources for their Justice and Peace co-ordination service.

## 3:2 JUSTICE AND PEACE

Our visits to the various circumscriptions have brought home to us one thing: human liberation, action for Justice and Peace and participation in development activities are becoming more and more a constitutive part of our mission of evangelisation, of our Spiritan life and of our spirituality, as our Rule of Life requires.

Actually, this dimension is to be found in the **charism of our Founders**. When Claude Poullart des Places founded his Seminary of the Holy Spirit, he was reacting in a creative manner against an injustice of his time: the impossibility for young men who came from poor families of becoming priests. Francis Libermann, in founding his "Project for the Blacks", wanted to bring the Gospel to the black race, but he also wanted to restore each person's dignity. He himself, because of his Jewish origins and his illness, had known what it was to suffer contempt and exclusion. That is



why he has asked us to be "the advocates, supporters and defenders of the weak and the little ones against all who oppress them".

From the beginning, Spiritans have been involved in development, in action for Justice and Peace, in the liberation of peoples (for example, the defence of the Micmac Indians by the first Spiritans). But today we are equally concerned with the structures which give rise to situations of under-development and of injustice.

**Approaches to Justice and Peace** vary, certainly, from continent to continent with particular styles in each country. In North America and Europe it will be a matter of defending human rights, of giving special attention to migrants, of protesting against North-South injustices, of struggling for the protection of the environment. In Africa the emphasis will be on Justice and Peace for integral development which is culturally adapted, on protest against worsening "trade terms", on respect for the common good with reference to corruption and privilege. For Latin America the concern will be with problems of land, the liberation of the poor from conditions bordering on slavery, and, more recently, with an awareness of the trampling of the most fundamental rights of the Indian minorities. All these different aspects constitute a wealth which demonstrates Justice and Peace in context and provides reference points for the various continents and countries in their respective approaches.

Justice and Peace is alive and well in our Institute, thanks to the initiatives undertaken by those in positions of responsibility in the circumscriptions (appointment of co-ordinators, discussion in Chapters and General Assemblies, protests against injustices and actions undertaken) and by virtue of the initiatives sponsored by the General Council. Under number 4.5 of this document, an account of the General Council's initiatives will be found. A more detailed report in English and in French will be available during the General Chapter.

This progress has been particularly apparent in our African circumscriptions which up to now were not, generally speaking, very active in this constitutive aspect of our work of evangelisation. That is why we will deal more particularly with Africa in what follows.

The **Pan-African Seminar on Justice and Peace held at Lesotho** from the 29th of May to the 3rd of June 1988, was a significant breakthrough for this continent. The seminar was jointly organized by the Secretariat of SCEAM and the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace with Cardinal Etchegaray. At the time, a Spiritan was the Secretary of SCEAM. Another Spiritan was actively involved in drawing up the final document. The resolutions passed at this seminar, which brought together bishops, priests, men and women religious and laypeople, were groundbreaking: "To establish a commission for Justice and Peace in every diocese in Africa"; "to establish formation structures for laypeople working in the media"; "to foster a Church

which will concern itself effectively with the problems of Justice and Peace in Africa"; "to support the initiatives for Justice and Peace undertaken by the religious communities"; (see part four of the Report 4.5).

Our confreres living in Africa are aware that the phenomenon of impoverishment is becoming more and more common as a result of the worsening of the "trade terms", of natural disasters (drought), of deforestation, poor management and the greed of the powerful and wealthy. Of the 25 poorest countries in the world, 16 are in Africa; of the 25 countries whose inhabitants have the shortest life expectancy, 14 are in Africa (life expectancy: 42 years, as against 72 in Europe).

They are also aware that the words of Libermann quoted above take on a very vivid meaning here. In recent years and months, as a result of political shakeups which are sweeping across Africa at this very moment, many Episcopal Conferences have adopted highly courageous positions and denounced the injustices rampant in their countries and in the continent:

\* Pentecost 1990 Letter of the Bishops of Cameroon: "Pastoral Letter of the Cameroon Episcopal Conference on the economic crisis afflicting the country."

\* Memorandum addressed to President Mobutu in 1990 by The Permanent Committee of the Episcopal Conference of Zaire.

\* Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Kenya: "Let Us Face The Future With Hope": January 1992.

\* Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Central Africa: "What Are We Doing To Our Country?"

\* Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Malawi (March 1992) as a result of which they were placed under house arrest for some days by the authorities.

Justice and Peace will be one of the themes of the coming African Synod. We look forward to a heightened awareness throughout Africa of this issue. We also look for it among our confreres who, it must be admitted, are not all fully persuaded of the importance of this dimension in the task of evangelisation.

### 3.3 INCULTURATION

Almost everywhere in the world we see more and more a need to inculturate the message of the Gospel: it is not simply a task reserved for certain Churches (even though it is a much-canvassed subject in Asia and in Africa, and one of the five themes to be taken up by the African Synod). It

is a concern of the whole Church, since culture is something continually evolving. The Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* of Paul VI had already pointed out that "the division between the Gospel and culture is certainly the major issue of our time" (n. 20).

Research into inculturation is mainly the province of local Churches and thus is encouraged in one place, tolerated in a second and discouraged in another. As Spiritans, sensitive to the voice of God's people, we make our contribution here by the respect we show for the characteristics of the local Churches.

### 3:3.1 Formation: a viewpoint

An awareness of the necessity of the inculturation of Christian faith and practice, as well as research on inculturation, should be especially strong in Centres of formation under Spiritan auspices, whether they are run in collaboration with other Institutes or with Universities. These include the *Missionary Institute* in London (MIL), the *Center d'Etudes et de Recherches missionnaires* (CERM) in Paris, the *Theological Union* in Chicago, the *interreligious Consortium* in Nairobi (*SIST*) which has set it self precisely this task of promoting a theology for contemporary Africa.

These Centres should produce "career" researchers. Research at University level is all the more important for the inculturation of the (Gospel) message in as much as problems of increasing complexity confront the Christian conscience with specific instances on every continent. These problems have to do with ethics, inequalities, contingent or structural injustices, as we have attempted to illustrate in the first part of this report.

And above and beyond research strictly so-called, formation itself should be inculturated so as to allow the Spiritan to live the Gospel and the Spiritan charism in the very heart of his own culture.

### 3:3.2 Inculturation in first evangelisation

The meeting at Chevilly on first evangelisation showed that confreres involved with this aspect of our Mission habitually insist on the prerequisite of a long period of cohabitation with the cultural group in question, the better to understand its culture. Thus engaged, they can also unobtrusively help the people, while these latter are discovering the Gospel, to identify for themselves those elements of their religion and of their traditions which can find fulfillment in Christianity and those which are negative, which stand in need of salvation, of being liberated by the Good News.



In this way catechesis can often make use of the wisdom that resides in storytelling to help people to interpret their history as a history of salvation. The use of mime and gesture to interiorize the Gospel often has greater impact in oral civilisations than theoretical lessons (for example, in the Baka civilisation gestures are a means of "completing" nature). Increasingly, we are coming to respect the sites of ancestor worship and to help those in charge of these ancestral rites to develop them independently of a climate of fear. At the moment of death, prayer vigils have often helped to make a clean break with the still-prevalent practice of looking for scapegoats. In many places this custom still constitutes a major impediment to the true liberation of individuals and of groups. At one and the same time there is respect for the enormous importance assigned to the phenomenon of death and liberation from unjust behaviour which is connected with the mysterious event that death represents. This is especially so when it refers to the death of a young person.

### **3:3.3 An issue in all our apostolic activity**

As a result of the increase in syncretistic tendencies (e.g., in Africa) and of sects (throughout the world), most Spiritans working with local churches are sharply aware of the necessity of inculturation. The truth is, the success of these movements is largely due to their efforts to respond to deeply felt religious needs.

\* In small tightly-knit communities, sects provide support and give attention to people whose traditional way of life has been disrupted and to those who have been uprooted.

\* In their liturgies they make room for spontaneous expression and they link physical and spiritual healing. Thus they attract people seeking unity in their lives, trying to harmonise the various aspects of their life and of their personality.

\* By giving them responsibility, they lead out of their anonymity people who wish to take responsibility for making decisions about and putting into practice elements of their social and religious life.

Nevertheless, they also represent a danger to the integrity of the faith:

\* some of them preach an exclusively human salvation.

\* more emphasis is placed on the Old Testament than on the fullness of revelation in Jesus Christ.

Aware of the issue and of the challenge posed by inculturation, Spiritans are more and more involved in:



- \* the promotion of community models which are more fraternal, more human in scale; of basic ecclesial communities; of communities which give support to people in particular circumstances: divorce, remarriage, marginalisation;
- \* continuing education and formation in the faith where the Bible plays an important part;
- \* the development of ministers for the service of the human and Christian community and the formation of key laypeople;
- \* the acceptance of certain manifestations of popular religion in order to make people feel at home in liturgical celebrations;
- \* the search for a new faith-language which will make use of common everyday speech, and of audiovisual techniques.

Furthermore, our confreres appreciate that when they engage in action for Justice and Peace amongst their people, when they help them to take control of their own future and to free themselves in the name of gospel values, they do more. For it is in this very process of conscientisation and of liberation that people most effectively appropriate the Good News of the Christian faith. Our confreres see in this faith a rich source of meaning which gives back hope to their people and allows their culture to rediscover its roots.

The trust placed in the Church at the time of the recent political changes which have occurred in Africa is a sign of this. Provided the church itself does not become a partisan political force, this will have a profound influence. In Haiti, the voodoo sects have for some time now moved closer to Christianity, seeing the Christian faith engaged in bringing freedom to all the people. But there too the Church could miss the opportunity provided of being inculturated in a people, if it hesitates too long while playing a prudent waiting game at variance with the Gospel.

While the work of researchers, specialists and theologians is necessary for inculturation, their efforts run the risk of remaining empty and ineffectual if Christians cannot find communities in which to express and to celebrate their faith and thus to reconcile their culture and their inmost being. This is well expressed in *Redemptoris Missio*:

"In effect, inculturation must involve the whole people of God, and not just a few experts, since the people reflect the authentic "sensus fidei" which must never be lost sight of ...it must be an expression of the community's life, one which must mature within the community itself, and not be exclusively the result of erudite research" (n. 54).

As for Africa, we think that the African Synod (at which inculturation will be one of the five principal themes for consideration) will give a fresh impulse in this area to the African Churches and may well throw out a challenge to other Churches.

### **3:3.4 Inculturation in Spiritan life**

One form of inculturation which affects us closely is that of our religious life, that is to say its "diversified practice ... amongst different peoples and in different cultures" (S.R.L., n. 35).

With regard to Africa, a **research unit** was established at the time of the meeting of Superiors and Formators from our African Provinces and Foundations held at Saverne in June, 1986. This group was directed to study the question of the inculturation of Spiritan life in Africa. The first theme studied was : "Poverty, family, community." A questionnaire was sent to all African confreres. Regional co-ordinators collated the replies and presented a synthesis at the second meeting of Superiors and Formators which took place at Nairobi in June 1988. On that occasion Fr Okoye presented a study entitled "Religious poverty and culture". Another study on the theme: "Evangelical chastity and culture" was presented by the same Assistant General at the meeting of Novice Masters in Dublin in 1989. The third meeting took place in July 1990 in Brazzaville and consisted of a more detailed study of the theme dealt with at Nairobi, with particular attention to the way of presenting and living poverty at various stages of formation.

## **3:4 LAY PEOPLE IN OUR CONGREGATION**

Since 1968 every General Chapter has sought to open up **new approaches** to permit laypeople to participate more effectively in the apostolic and community life of our religious family. The recommendations of the various Chapters were summed up by the Rule of Life which encourages the circumscriptions to welcome "with joy" those who "are associated with us" and to invite them "to share our spirituality and our apostolic life" (S.R.L. 24.3).

During the last 25 years the circumscriptions, urged on by these recommendations and encouragements, have tried out various possibilities for sharing our apostolic and community life with laypeople. These possibilities have generally been of two kinds: reception of those who wish to share our mission for a predetermined period (2 or 3 years) and, secondly, of those who seek a lifetime engagement with our Congregation. The former are almost always interested in a missionary experience overseas, while the

latter may be attracted by our mission or by the community life of our religious family.

There is a need for precision in the terminology by which these laypeople are described. Generally speaking, those with a temporary commitment are called "lay missionaries" or "lay volunteers" or "lay associates". Those with a more long-term commitment, a "lifetime commitment", are more frequently called "lay Spiritan associates". This appellation causes some canonical difficulty since our Rule of Life seems to reserve the title Spiritan for those who have made religious profession.

Keeping these distinctions in mind, we present a list, certainly not an exhaustive one, of the different groups of laypeople connected with us since the Chapter of 1968.

#### **1969 FRANCE: ("COOPERANTS MISSIONAIRES")**

France has, since 1969 been involved in the formation of laypeople who showed an interest in the Third World and in Mission. Up to the present, the Province has worked together in this formation process with organisations of missionary co-operation in Brittany, Paris, Lyon and Alsace. Thousands of young volunteers have gone forth under the auspices of these organisations. Many of them, under the rubric of "Pastoral Co-operation", have shared directly in the life of a missionary community. At the present time the French Province is setting up different forms of association with laypeople in the context of fraternal organisations under the title "Esprit et Mission".

#### **1971 TRANSCANADA: "VICS" (Volunteer International Christian Service)**

This ecumenical organisation brings together lay volunteers who put their technical and professional abilities at the service of development work in the Third World in a Christian context. At any given time, there are about forty VICS members working overseas. To date, 363 people have participated.

#### **1972 SPAIN: "LAY MISSIONARIES"**

The Province of Spain has tried in various ways to bring laypeople into contact with the apostolate and with the essentials of Spiritan life. They have been sent to Angola, Cameroon, Tanzania, Paraguay and Brazil. The Province provides for the formation of the lay missionary, puts him in contact with a Bishop and negotiates a contract.

#### **1974 TRANSCANADA: "LAY SPIRITAN ASSOCIATES"**

This idea of "lay Spiritans" came about as a result of a conversation on Pentecost Sunday 1974 between the Spiritan Provincial and a married



couple. It had already been under study for some time. These lay Spiritans wish not only to live the charism and the community life of Spiritans, but also where possible to work in close collaboration with us, especially in works for the oppressed and the marginalized. These "lay Spiritans" are considered to be full members of the Province and attend meetings of the Community, including Chapters.

#### **1979 CANADA: "SPIRITAINS ASSOCIES"**

This Association was founded in the Province of Canada in 1979. It enables lay men and women to engage in the evangelising mission of the Church in collaboration with Spiritans and also to share their prayer and community life according to Spiritan spirituality. A handbook for associate members was recently produced.

#### **1989 GERMANY: "MISSIONAR AUF ZEIT" (Temporary Missionary)**

At the Berlin Katholikentag in 1980 young people expressed a wish that they be allowed to participate in the missionary activities of the missionary Institutes. The *Missionar Auf Zeit* project came into being as a result of this request. The first MAZ (Temporary Missionaries) went overseas in 1983, some for one year, others for up to three years. Up to the present, more than thirty of them have returned to Germany after this missionary experience, while another dozen of them are working right now in Latin America and in Africa.

#### **1982 UNITED STATES EAST - TANZANIA: "SPIRITAN ASSOCIATES"**

The original idea for this programme came from The United States East Province and the District of Kilimanjaro. It provides Christians with the opportunity to make a temporary commitment to mission service in the Spiritan tradition. More than 40 people have performed missionary service. In fact, a group of them have established a missionary center in the former novitiate at Dorseyville, Pittsburgh.

#### **1987 GERMANY: "ASSOZIIERTEN" (Associates)**

Originally, many of these young people belonged to a study group run by a Spiritan in Stuttgart. Subsequently, contacts were made with the local community and the young people got a chance to share Spiritan community life. Other young people, on completing their missionary experience as MaZ (*Missionar auf Zeit*), immediately joined this founding group.

#### **1990 HOLLANDE: "MEDESTANDERS": Associates**

After many years of research and a number of short-term projects, the Provincial Council set up an Associates programme with the name *Medestanders*. Its purpose is to prepare lay men and women who wish to



place themselves at the service of the poorest people, in a Spiritan context. This programme includes the formation and material support necessary for a commitment of at least three years.

### **1990 ENGLAND: "SPIRITAN LAY PEOPLE"**

After several years of investigation, the Provincial Council has approved the setting up of a group of Spiritan lay associates. With this in mind, a number of laypeople have already been in touch with the Province.

**By way of conclusion**, the following may be said: our Rule of Life has taken up the invitation of Vatican II and of recent Papal documents to bring about a greater degree of collaboration with laypeople, to share with them our spirituality and our apostolic life. As to the practical implementation of this collaboration and sharing, the Rule of Life gives wide discretion to the various circumscriptions according to each one's circumstances, to those of the local Church and the particular expectations of laypeople.

Many questions remain unanswered and will only be resolved gradually: the place of lay associates in Church law; their formation; their eventual participation in decision-making situations. Thanks to the international contacts strengthened by the Pittsburgh meeting and to their information circular (*The Feather*), our Lay Associates, through their own unique perceptions, are exploring ways of becoming more deeply involved in our Spiritan life.

## **3:5 FORMATION**

### **3:5.1 Historical Survey**

The **600 young Spiritans in formation** throughout the Congregation are certainly a source of joy, of confidence in the future of Spiritan mission, or indeed of mission in general. But they also constitute a great responsibility: the quality of formation today will determine the kind of missionary family we shall be tomorrow. While formation has always been a work of the greatest concern, today it is a work even more demanding than in the past, by virtue of the great cultural upheavals of our times. This is just as true for those with responsibility for formation as it is for those being formed.

Up to 1968 almost all the houses of formation throughout the world followed the same formation scheme. Formators were appointed by the General Council and admission to vows and to Orders was decided by the

same Council. With the coming of the theology of the local Church and the emphasis placed on inculturation, different schemas and courses of formation came into existence in our Institute, all the while striving to remain faithful to the same Spiritan charism.

For all practical purposes, each Province and Foundation established its own programme of formation and trained its own formators. Gradually, the decrease in the numbers in formation in some circumscriptions, coupled with the shortage of formators needed to deal with the increase in numbers in others, pointed to the need for exchange in the area of formation and for a pooling of our resources. Side by side with the regional meetings of Provincials, regional **meetings of formators** were established. And so we now have:

- the annual meeting of European formators;
- the periodic meeting of North American formators;
- the meeting of FAC, Nigerian and WAF formators;
- the meeting of all the formators of Africa (every second year);
- the annual meeting of Brazilian formators.

These meetings are diverse in style. Some are more tightly organized than others, some are decision-making, while others put forward proposals to be ratified by the respective Provincials. In the past there were occasional differences of opinion concerning authority; these were eventually overcome as a result of consultation and dialogue between formators and Provincials.

### 3:5.2 Unity in diversity

Within the special Spiritan charism, there is room for legitimate diversity as n. 55 of the Spiritan Rule of Life emphasizes, speaking of the fact that "our practice of religious life takes on different forms among different peoples or in various cultures".

The **meeting of Novice Masters** in Dublin in July, 1989 introduced three principal forms of novitiate to the Congregation:

- an "instruction" model: pride of place is given to courses and to exercises. Personal free time is much reduced;
- an "induction" model, with fewer courses and more flexible structures; the experience examined is rather that of the novices themselves;
- an "insertion" model: great emphasis on the surrounding environment, ecclesial and social, for the purposes of formation; a like importance attached to solidarity with the poor.

In order not to distort the picture, it should be noted that these are only general characteristics. Every novitiate will usually have a mixture of

elements from all three models. Nevertheless, it is essential to avoid the danger that, through lack of contact, the various novitiates and, more generally, the various forms of formation cycles, should become strangers to each other. This would mean the formation of Spiritans whose idea of mission and of Spiritan life would be so different from each other's that they would be incapable of living a fraternal missionary life together.

In ID n. 44 (April 1989) the General Council indicated certain common elements of Spiritan formation. This perception was taken up in July 1991 at the **meeting of Formators at SIST**, in Enugu, Nigeria. The report of that meeting provides a rich source of useful information for the formators of the Congregation. The resolutions adopted at that meeting have formed the basis of much study and discussion, especially among the European formators and Provincials.

As a result of the recommendation put forward, the General Council has called together a special commission made up of six formators who reflect the different approaches to Spiritan formation. The meeting is scheduled for the end of April '92 and is charged with the task of preparing for the Spiritan Regions a working plan with the following objectives:

- to collate the various reactions to the conclusions reached at Enugu, to analyze them and make appropriate recommendations;
- to establish guidelines for a formation programme for the Congregation and to lay out its specific outlines;
- to examine the state of formation in the Congregation and the means necessary to achieve greater effectiveness and greater solidarity.

The proceedings of this commission will be entrusted to the General Council. Needless to say, there is no question here of going back to a strict uniformity, or of stifling creativity and diversity. The recommendation of the SIST meeting was quite clear: the programme should be flexible and capable of being harmonized with the various cultures. Each region, through meetings of its own formators, will bring to the programme its own regional and cultural flavour.

### 3:5.3 The Needs of Formation

**Personnel:** Even though the shortage of formators is outside the terms of reference of the presentation on Foundations and new Provinces, the need for personnel in the work of formation has already been emphasized at the end of that section. Here and there lay people, men and women with teaching qualifications in the humanities or the social sciences, in philosophy or theology, have been called upon.



**Rationalisation of resources:** some circumscriptions have lots of personnel and few students; others have few personnel and lots of students. The ratio varies from 1 Formator per student to 1 per 30 students. Some of our houses of formation are empty; in some of our Foundations we have had to build them or increase their number. The question naturally arises: what is the best way of sharing our resources so as to avoid the wastage of personnel and material goods? Should we lean towards consolidation by common language groupings in the second cycle?

Since the Saverne meeting in 1986 this sort of rationalisation was developed for Africa and put into effect by the General Council. There are now 3 second cycles for Africa: **Brazzaville, Enugu and Nairobi**. With the development of a formation programme in Southern Africa in the coming years, the issue of the opening of a new center must be faced. In order to avoid the multiplication of Spiritan centres of formation we should study the possibilities provided by diocesan and inter-diocesan seminaries, as well as by religious and interreligious Centres of formation. The Central African Foundation and Nigeria have already initiated an exchange programme for formators and students.

Some regions - North America, for instance - organise their formation programme on a regional basis. Europe has proposed two novitiates: an English-speaking one in Dublin for Ireland, England and Germany, and a French-speaking one which has not yet been set up.

**The preparatory months before the taking of perpetual vows** are often regionally organized: as in Europe, FAC, Nigeria and WAF. Despite some problems, these courses have been welcomed by the young people who have participated in them.

The Enugu meeting proposed that the Generalate should nominate someone whose special task it would be to co-ordinate all formation in the Congregation, in understanding with the General Council, and following the model already in existence for the co-ordination of Justice and Peace. Is this the model that should be put into operation? Or should a General Assistant be appointed whose primary function it would be to visit the houses of formation and to co-ordinate the work? We would like to hear the thoughts of the Chapter members on this subject.

### 3:5.4 Towards a more specialized formation

As local Churches become relatively self-sufficient in personnel, they call on us for more specialized projects for which they do not have the personnel: formation of the laity, of youth, of Christian community leaders, for the direction of pastoral centres, for education, ecumenical projects, inter-religious dialogue, for administrative and financial responsibilities. All



of these call for training in the so-called profane disciplines, as well as in religious ones.

It is important to identify these various aptitudes among the young men in basic formation and to provide the relevant training without prejudice to their basic formation in common.

However, specialized training to meet the needs of the Congregation and those of local Churches is often better prescribed after a period of direct pastoral experience. This holds true whether it is only after a short period - say three years - or later on, during a protracted renewal experience.

### **3:5.5 Practical and Pastoral Experience Programme**

Practical experience is an important element in Spiritan formation. It gives our young men the opportunity to experience directly the apostolic and community dimensions of our life in a setting outside their own culture. They can then relate their subsequent formation to real-life experience. This programme involves in the work of formation those Spiritans who are already in the area where the Programme is taking place.

Three years ago, the Provinces of North America held a very interesting meeting of formators and the Superiors of the circumscriptions receiving young Spiritans for this programme. The purpose of the meeting was to clarify their mutual expectations and to explore further areas of possible collaboration.

The Bishops are asking our communities to accept their diocesan seminarians for their diaconal or pastoral experiences. This can sometimes diminish our ability to accommodate our own students. Many Provinces call on the General Council to help them find suitable locations for the Programme. In the future, it may be that the General Council can play a co-ordinating role in matching requests for and offers of such locations.

### **3:5.6 Continuing education**

There is a wealth of opportunities for continuing education in many countries. Several Provinces have designed tentative programmes, according to the expressed interests of confreres and the needs of contemporary mission.

These possibilities deal with two things: one is what the Rule of Life refers to as "a substantial time of renewal" - about once every ten years - related to the needs of the circumscription and of the mission; the other

refers to that **ongoing**, lifelong education which consists of attendance at seminars and conferences, and of reading. In the letter of Christmas 1991 to all the confreres it was pointed out that the substantial time of renewal should be based on day to day continuing education if it is not to be simply a barren interlude. We have been agreeably surprised from time to time during visitation to find in rather isolated places libraries stocked with up to date works in the religious and human sciences. In other communities - and less frequently, it should be said -continuing education does not seem to be a major preoccupation.

Furthermore, Spiritans in increasing numbers value courses, study days, information sessions with a missionary theme which are related to our Spiritan charism. The European Region has already organized, in 1990 and in 1991, a "**Spiritans month**" at Chevilly. A similar month is being planned for this year. Such undertakings are to be applauded and we encourage the other regions to do likewise.

While our intellectual, theological and pastoral education is to continue all through our life, there is another dimension which ought not to be neglected: that which integrates the different aspects of our apostolic life as listed in n. 13 of our Rule of Life:

"the proclamation of the Good News, the practice of the evangelical counsels and a life in fraternal and praying community."

**Continuing education** should embrace these **three dimensions of our Spiritan life**.

Our Rule of Life underlines the fundamental connection between our apostolate and our prayer (ns. 85-88), the importance of prayer (n. 81), and the link between our apostolate and our community life. This aspect of continuing education is very important, relating as it does to the credibility of our life, both religious and missionary. Does our life carry significance for the young people of today? Does it appeal to them? Many times, especially during our visits to the European and American Provinces, we have heard that question being asked. Why are there so few vocations in our Institute and in so many others? Is there a lack of clarity in the presentation of the missionary ideal? How is it that other groups and other Institutes can attract young people, the groups of evangelical life, the new communities? Not all of these groups originate in the "charismatic renewal" movement or in the traditionalist wing of the Church. Some of them have found an admirable balance between apostolate, prayer and community life. Surely that is the kind of balance recommended in the Rule of Life and which is also to be found in Fr. Libermann.

Some "**Spiritans Sources**" are not available in all the languages of the Congregation. In some circumscriptions the study of the history of the

Congregation and of the living tradition, of "Spiritan spirituality", is confined to the time of the Novitiate.

### 3:6 THE BROTHERS

During the period 1858 to 1878, Brothers were more numerous in the Congregation than clerics. In fact, right up to the end of the 19th century there was only a slight difference in the numbers of the two categories. In 1898 there were 623 clerics and 565 Brothers. Up to the 1930's the Brothers still formed a majority in Holland, Germany and Portugal.

During the last few decades **the percentage of Brothers has decreased rapidly**. In 1968 they constituted 12.9%, while in 1992 they are 10%. Indeed, in the young Provinces and the Foundations the percentage of Brothers is rather small, there are only a few of them. The vocation of the Brother in clerical Institutes has been, since Vatican II, the object of much consideration. Many ancient distinctions and barriers have disappeared. Even though some traces still persist, it is possible to discern a new approach to this vocation, among both priests and brothers. Some people would wish that the distinction between the two categories would, if not disappear, at least be dissolved in the general title of Spiritan. This would put the emphasis on our common missionary vocation rather than on the different forms it can take.

During visitation we have had the opportunity to meet the Brothers in the various circumscriptions, to listen to their concerns and their aspirations. In February last, we invited to the Generalate a small group of Brothers deemed representative of the diverse circumstances of Brothers in our Institute, in order to study with them the meaning of their vocation and to examine with them the means for further promoting this vocation of consecrated layman in our missionary family. In what follows, we wish to recall the content of that meeting.

#### 3:6.1 The Brothers' Identity

In a Congregation of priests, there is always the danger that the identity of the Brothers and their special vocation will be lost sight of. At one time, the movement towards ordination was so strong that Brothers became brothers or remained so almost in spite of the pressure to the contrary. Traces of that attitude are still to be found occasionally, but a new perception of our common identity has surfaced which highlights our unity in the "apostolic life" (S.R.L. n. 3). "Whatever may be the work we are engaged in as priests or as Brothers, we aim to bear witness to a kingdom of Justice and Peace ..." n. 24 of the Rule tells us. This "work" should be the

object of an intelligent choice in the course of formation, backed up by appropriate preparation. Some Brothers, albeit a handful, feel threatened by the reception into the Congregation of lay Spiritan associates. Others have come to think of themselves as movers and shakers in the Lay Spiritan movement.

### 3:6.2 Formation

The Rule of Life provides for a period of **common formation**. Included in this is the Novitiate intended for "All Spiritans, whether or not they are called to an ordained ministry in the Church ..." (S.R.L. n. 135). Each Spiritan will thus receive an intellectual, religious and missionary formation, while simultaneously learning to live and work with other Spiritans and having complete respect for each other's apostolates.

This formation of the Brothers should comprehend a **mission experience programme**, where necessary a **programme of professional training**, some experience of working with confreres of other nationalities and an opportunity to learn foreign languages. It goes without saying that the statements in the Rule of Life concerning continuing education and renewal apply to every Spiritan.

The list of possibilities in the service of Mission is lengthy: construction, economics, management, health care, catechesis, rural development, education, social and legal assistance, communications. We should also mention the general services of the Congregation to which priests and Brothers are asked to contribute for a longer or shorter period of time.

### 3:6.3 The missionary apostolate

Some Brothers have made the observation that in the past they were not considered as fully-fledged missionaries and were often left in the same appointment for most of their lives. Today's Brother sees himself and wishes to be seen as a **full partner in the work of evangelisation**, as indeed the Rule of Life would have it.

More and more we find Brothers filling **positions of responsibility** in the Congregation. One meets them teaching in secondary schools, directing professional training programmes, involved in social action, working with migrants and with drug addicts, engaged in the work of first evangelisation, responsible for co-ordinating international aid and relief organisations.



A solid intellectual, professional and spiritual training for the fulfillment of this apostolate will lead to the dismantling of these barriers which can exist between ordained and non-ordained ministers.

#### **3:6.4 Participation in decision-making**

In circumscriptions of more recent date the Brothers easily take their place side by side with the priests in the discharge of administrative duties. On the other hand, the weight of history and a certain element of segregation still make themselves felt in the more traditional circumscriptions, despite all protestations to the contrary. We believe that there is still a lot of work to be done to **bring the Brothers into the decision-making process**. This holds true not only for decisions concerning them personally, but also for those related to the life of the Congregation.

#### **3:6.5 The future of the Brothers**

As in other Congregations, the vocation of the Brothers in our Congregation is in a state of flux. When we emphasize the fact that we belong to a religious-missionary family we provide equal opportunity to priest and consecrated layman to put into practice their primary call to the various forms of service.

The Brothers we have met are confident that they will find their proper place in our Institute and that they will succeed in their invitation to others to come and join us. There is something at stake here, a challenge for the future of our Congregation. Would it not be a pity if, in a Church becoming more and more declericalized, our Congregation should be going in the opposite direction?

## PART FOUR

### THE LEADERSHIP OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

#### 4:0 INTRODUCTION

In this last section of our Report we want to give in a more direct fashion, an account of our stewardship. We made a habit, during the six annual Retreats of the General Council, of examining our stewardship and our work as a team. Our retreats, like our weekly Eucharistic celebrations followed by broad-ranging discussion, were times of special significance for sharing, for being together as a team, independently of the actual meetings of the General Council.

No two of us are alike, each with his own missionary experience and approach to mission; yet we have tried to realize among us the idea of unity in diversity. For, if this diversity exists at the heart of our Institute, it exists in like fashion within the General Council. Have we exemplified this unity as we served our Spiritan brothers? You must answer that question as well as we. As regards ourselves, we have tried to share in a real way. We were not always in agreement about everything; sometimes we disagreed about important matters, but each of us felt at ease and free to speak his own mind, to defend his point of view. At the same time, each of us was willing to get behind the others if his point of view was not the accepted one. In this way we grew together; each of us found his perspective enriched by what others' perspectives lent to his.

The General Chapter of 1986 gave us certain directives and commissions concerning our leadership. In numbers 4.1 to 4.7 we give an account of the implementation of these directives and commissions. Beginning with 4.8 we will speak of the other main thrusts of our leadership; this will be done by putting before you some questions concerning the leadership of a Congregation with the decentralized structure that is ours.

#### 4:1 THE SPIRITAN RULE OF LIFE

One of the commissions entrusted to the General Council by the General Chapter had to do with the Rule of Life:

"The General Chapter authorizes the Superior General and his Council:

- to prepare in its final form the text of the Constitutions to be presented to the C.R.S.I. (*the Congregation for Religious and for Secular Institutes*);

- to effect whatever emendations may be requested by the C.R.S.I.

During the first year of our term of office one of our main tasks was to see to the revision of the final text of the Rule unanimously approved by the General Chapter, its approval by the C.R.S.I. (which had in the meantime become the *Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life*), and its publication in the official languages of the Congregation.

#### 4:1.1 Approval of the Rule

By the end of October 1986 the Commission for the revision of the text of the Rule had finished its work. When the General Council had approved those modifications of presentation and style proposed by the Commission, the Spiritan Rule of Life was sent to the C.R.S.I. for approval on the 15th of November.

From November '86 to June '87 we were in constant contact with the C.R.S.I., negotiating the various modifications requested. A detailed account (to which we refer you) of all the changes will be found at the end of the *Handbook commentary on the Rule of Life*.

On Pentecost Sunday, the 7th of June, 1987, our Rule of Life was approved by the C.R.S.I. It was formally promulgated by the Superior General on the 8th of September of the same year.

#### 4:1.2 The translations

In accordance with the decision of the Enlarged General Council of Carcavelos (Portugal) in May 1982, the French text is the original text of our Rule of Life. The printing of this version was completed in January 1988. The Portuguese edition appeared in February and the English in May. Subsequently, other translations were made into Spanish, German, Dutch and Polish.

*The Handbook commentary* was put together in order to help confreres better appreciate the meaning of the Rule of Life. Each Chapter (of it) is presented in its general outline and, where necessary for an understanding of it, the genesis of the text is given.

### **4:1.3 The Rule of Life as a source of inspiration**

The Rule of Life has become the basis of our work of leadership. During our visitations we did our best to put it before the confreres, to draw attention to its most salient features and to emphasize its value as an apostolic and spiritual treasure-house for us. Many Retreats were organized which were given by the General Assistants or members of the staff of the Spiritan Resource and Animation Center.

Most circumscriptions made a point of presenting and analyzing the Rule of Life in seminars, written commentaries and study sessions planned over a number of years. Provincial and other Chapters took the S.R.L. as a basis or as a reference point in arriving at decisions or in determining new directions.

### **4:1.4 Evaluation**

At the enlarged General Council at Arusha we conducted a survey of the delegates to determine how the Rule of Life had been received. The main points of enquiry concerned the degree of interest aroused by the publication of the Rule and its use to provide an energising principle in the circumscriptions. According to the survey, the reaction had been very favourable. About 97% of the confreres described themselves as "interested", "very interested" or "enthusiastic" concerning the S.R.L. It seemed that only 3% had reservations about it. The Superiors had been painstaking in their method of presenting the S.R.L. to the members of their circumscriptions: this had been done through formal distribution of copies of the Rule, through presentations on study days, at regional meetings and at retreats.

The survey also dealt with a number of issues which created morale problems arising out of the Rule, such as: regional communities; the practice of poverty with reference to the cultural context; the danger of arriving at consensus over this or that text while failing to implement that consensus in day to day living, etc.

In the survey conducted in preparation for Arusha one question dealt with difficulties in the Rule or items missing from it. Some of these were brought up at Arusha. During the course of our visitation we discovered either through our own observations or through the remarks of confreres, that some sections of the Rule needed elaboration or further modification. Many requests for such modifications were made as a result of the General Council's request to the Superiors of the circumscriptions to express their opinion on the style of the 1992 Chapter. At the same time we asked them to indicate those items of the Rule in need of revision, in the light of their experience (S.R.L., n. 217.3). The General Council has collated all the replies



and will, in a separate document, present to you those points which it feels need clarification or which should be introduced into the text of the Rule.

## **4:2 DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PROVINCES AND FOUNDATIONS**

### **4:2.1 General objectives indicated by the 1986 Chapter**

The 1986 Chapter gave us the following general objectives:

- to promote the development of the new Provinces and Foundations;
- to set up the structures necessary for formation when local circumstances required it;
- to work towards making the Foundations self-sufficient in personnel and finances;
- to enhance Congregational solidarity with them, especially in this period of rapid growth;
- to promote the search for self-realisation and inculturation;
- to clarify their relations with the Districts and with the local Church.

### **4:2.2 Information and morale**

From the beginning of our term of office, we have felt that Spiritan Information should be used as a vehicle for conveying information about the Foundations and the new Provinces to the Congregation as a whole. Most of the following numbers have been devoted to this topic:

- n. 65, Jan.-Feb. 1987 on the Central African Foundation;
- n. 66 Mar.-Apr. 1987 on the East African Foundation;
- n. 67, May -Jun. 1987 on the West African Foundation;
- n. 70, Jan.-Feb. 1988 on the Southern African Foundation;
- n. 71, Mar.-Apr. 1988 on the Indian Ocean Foundation;
- n. 72, May -Jun. 1988 on the Province of Angola;
- n. 73, Aug.-Oct. 1988 on the Foundation of Zaire;
- n. 76, Mar.-Apr. 1989 on the Foundation of Puerto Rico;
- n. 81, Mar.-Apr. 1990 on the Province of Brazil.

The visits of the General Councilors and especially of the Superior General to the various circumscriptions provided the opportunity for briefings and information sessions about the Foundations and new Provinces.

Almost half of the time at the Enlarged General Council meeting in Arusha was taken up by the discussion of the item on the Foundations presented by the General Council. It was in the course of one of the sessions

devoted to this subject that the decision was taken to weight representation at the General Chapter in favour of the southern hemisphere. We took account of this in the allocation of delegates for the various circumscriptions.

In the wake of the enlarged Council of Arusha, we have provided the Congregation with an essay on the Foundations: namely, I/D 45 of November 1989, *The Foundations: A Challenge For the Congregation*.

#### **4:2.3 Participation in Chapters and General Assemblies**

As far as possible, we have given priority to our participation in the Chapters of the new Provinces (Angola, Nigeria, East Africa). Three General Councilors and the Superior General took part in the July, 1988 Encontro in Brazil, a vital occasion for the establishment of the Province of Brazil.

Likewise, we took part in the General Assembly of the Central African Foundation (1988) and that of the West African Foundation (September, 1991).

#### **4:2.4 Two Foundations become Provinces**

During our term of office, two new Provinces have come into existence: the East African Foundation became the Province of East Africa (2nd of February, 1989) and the Foundation of Brazil became the Province of Brazil (2nd of February, 1990).

The enlarged Council of Arusha gave the General Council some general directives to be employed in making the transition from Foundation to Province. A Foundation is ready to move to the status of a Province when:

- \* it has between 15 and 30 members with perpetual vows;
- \* there is a sufficient number of native-born formators;
- \* the essential administrative structures exist together with the personnel for their smooth operation;
- \* roughly two thirds of the native-born members express themselves, after due consultation, in favour of the move to one or more Provinces;
- \* a missionary programme has been developed in consultation with the General Council which will, at one and the same time, provide for a mission outside the circumscription and also serve as an animating principle within the Province;

\* the new Province can handle by itself at least 50% of its current expenses; this is, on the assumption that the structures (for doing so) already exist;

\* there has been agreement concerning relations with the Superiors of the neighbouring circumscriptions (in understanding with the General Council) so that the identity of the new Province and the unity of the Congregation will be preserved;

\* the statutes of the Province are clearly laid down before the move to Provincial status, or at least by the time of the first Provincial Chapter.

These guidelines are quite flexible and provide the General Council with leeway to make specific decisions in particular circumstances, in consultation with Superiors and other persons concerned.

#### 4:2.5 Formation structures

During the last six years the following physical structures for formation have been constructed or completed:

**FAC:** Libreville (first cycle), Brazzaville (second cycle), Mbalmayo (Novitiate).

**FOI:** Rose-Hill, Mauritius (Novitiate); Diego, Madagascar (Postulancy, Brottier House); Riviere des Pluies, Réunion (annex to the parish building for use as accommodation for the first cycle).

**EAP:** Magamba, Tanzania (Novitiate, accommodation for supervisory personnel); Njiro Hill, Tanzania (buildings and chapel to be completed); Nairobi, Kenya financial contribution reflecting our participation in the T.C.R. (Theological Center of Religious).

**NIGERIA:** Enugu: (Sist: Theology in partnership with WAF).

**WAF:** Ejisu, Ghana (first cycle); Ejisu, Ghana (Novitiate).

**ANGOLA:** Malanje (Postulancy)

**S. AFRICA:** Pietermaritzburg, RSA (House for first and second cycles); Vrede, RSA (Novitiate).

**ZAIRE FN.:** Lubumbashi (Postulancy)

Financing for these buildings comes in part from the "Formation Fund" established by the Province of Germany after the sale of one of its houses of formation.

Each year about 55% of the allocations from the Cor Unum Fund are directed to meeting the needs of formation in the Foundations and new Provinces. Some of these depend almost exclusively on these disbursements. In the last two years the sums disbursed by the Cor Unum fund have exceeded a million American dollars. This fund also provides timely aid for members of the Foundations and new Provinces on sabbaticals and for the training of those who intend to work there.

#### **4:2.6 Mission for the New Provinces and Foundations**

Continuing dialogue between the General Council and the circumscriptions has led to the designation of some particular areas of missionary work: Brazil for Puerto Rico, Guyana for Nigeria, Papua-New Guinea for the Indian Ocean Foundation, Malawi for the West African Foundation and, for the Central African Foundation, a pioneering project in Madagascar.

Many of the Provinces in the Northern Hemisphere have approached Southern Hemisphere circumscriptions for mission projects in these latter areas. The General Council has acted as intermediary in such cases.

Our confreres in the new Provinces and Foundations are frequently without the money needed in the missions for which they are responsible. While the General Council has been able to provide assistance in some instances, it seems likely that the number of such cases will increase in the future. Will the Cor Unum fund be able to provide help for these, given that the number of young men in formation in these circumscriptions continues to grow?

#### **4:2.7 Solidarity**

Since 1986, the level of financial sharing within the Congregation has doubled. In November 1988 the General Council requested from all the circumscriptions a once-only contribution consisting of 5% of their reserves to augment the capital in the mutual aid fund.

The General Council recently decided to set up a retirement fund for the Foundations and new Provinces. Money derived from the sale of Montana has been set aside for this purpose. We have made a survey of the circumscriptions in order to ascertain their opinion on the rate of



participation (needed) to set up this fund and its precise nature. Should it be confined to the Congregation or comprise other organisations (e.g., opus securitatis of Missio Aachen)?

After the Enlarged General Council at Arusha, the General Council asked the new Provinces and the Foundations to draw up their plans for becoming financially self-sufficient over the next five years. Some of them have done so, but it must be said that these plans can be realized only with the greatest difficulty because of the deteriorating economies of some of these countries. We would like the Chapter to give some thought to the question of financial self-sufficiency, perhaps by way of a commission constituted for that purpose.

We have already drawn attention (2.3) to the necessity of personnel sharing. There is still work to be done on the best method of co-ordinating the availability of personnel for formation. According to S.R.L n. 161, the Foundations are directly under the Superior General and his Council who do not, however, have authority over the disposition of personnel. We are grateful to those Provinces which regard as a priority the assistance they give to the Foundations in matters of personnel - France for FAC and FOI, Ireland for WAF.

#### **4.3 REGIONALISATION**

Regionalisation is one of the aspects of solidarity dealt with in no.3.1 of this Report. In charging the General Council with the responsibility of promoting solidarity within the Congregation, the 1986 General Chapter specifically mentioned Regionalisation, when it spoke of "regional meetings to deal with shared objectives".

The Congregation's attempts to bring about these regional groupings began with the Chapter of 1974. It was stated that the principle of subsidiarity which the Chapter of 1968 (DD n. 149) applied to the Congregation, should be offset by various kinds of sharing, so as not to fragment the life of the Institute. Since that time, the Enlarged General Councils and the regional meetings of Major Superiors have come into existence.

##### **4.3.1 Regionalisation in the Rule of Life**

Although it does so mainly in an implicit fashion, the Rule of Life does take up the notion of Regionalisation. On many occasions it speaks of it indirectly: for instance, with reference to the Enlarged General Council it says that the election of delegates should be made on the basis of "regional

groupings" (n. 206.5); preparations for it will be made by Superiors of circumscriptions "in regional meetings" (n. 206.6); the objective of the enlarged Council will be "to strengthen the collaboration between the various circumscriptions"(n. 206.3).

Accordingly, the General Council has tried to promote meetings of Major Superiors (n. 185.3) with a view to fostering "solidarity between circumscriptions" (n. 199.1). Although they have no legal standing, these meetings are on their way to becoming a feature of Spiritan life. Similarly, the General Council has encouraged other meetings, organized on a regional basis and having to do with particularly important areas of Spiritan life (formators, bursars, co-ordinators of Justice and Peace, etc.). Wherever possible, a member of the General Council has participated in these meetings. The reports coming from them have been formally considered at Council meetings and have thus enabled us to gauge the development of solidarity in the Congregation. Ns. 4.5 and 4.10 of this Report give an account of what has been done in this area.

#### **4:3.2 Models of regionalisation**

Regionalisation was one of the themes taken up by the Arusha Enlarged Council of May 1988. In preparation for that Council, the Planning Service of the General Council conducted a survey in Rome amongst 16 religious Congregations concerning the way in which they practiced the principle of regionalisation.

These models varied widely between Congregations, according to the leadership style of each and especially depending on their administrative model, whether decentralised or otherwise. Many Institutes work with regional Superiors. In some instances the Regional Superior is a General Councillor who resides in his region without a particular jurisdiction, but who regularly travels to Rome for meetings of the General Council where he will raise problems pertaining to his region. In others, such a regional Superior will supervise his region and discharge certain responsibilities, particularly those relating to formation. An account of this survey will be found in the Arusha file which is available to Capitulants.

#### **4:3.3 Spiritan practice**

The notion of a region which has grown up in our Congregation is somewhat different. Regionalisation has developed largely with reference to some shared work, whether it be that of formation or of responsibility for a mission, or of the two together. Most of the Foundations came into being as

a result of the former, while in North America there is a common novitiate and collaboration in the work for Haitians and in Mexico.

In other instances the Superiors of circumscriptions will come together in order to exchange information and to co-ordinate their efforts on particularly important items. The Superiors of Central Africa began meeting with these aims in mind at the beginning of the '70's. The founding of FAC in 1977 provided a fresh impetus for such meetings. The collaboration of all the Districts of the Brazil-Paraguay Region brought about the evolution of the Southern district into the Province of Brazil. It was these Districts again which fostered the spirit of community amongst all the Spiritans of the region (for example, the *Encontrao* held every two years). The *Encontrao* has helped greatly in determining the issue of their relations with the new Province.

Regions are delineated according to the criteria of geographical proximity, cultural affinity or common interest. A certain basic organisation is always required. In the Region of Europe a permanent Secretariat co-ordinates the various Commissions and prepares the meetings of the Provincials. But the decisions made at these meetings must be ratified by the respective Provincial Councils. On the other hand, in the region of North America the circumscriptions have accepted the loss of some of their individual decision-making power in favour of the effective working of the Region.

Apart from the advantages of working together, regionalisation can lead to a realigning of circumscriptions. Actually, circumscriptions with a declining number of personnel can make the administration of the Congregation top-heavy. Thus, the district of Cameroon East and the District of Yaoundé have decided to merge into one District - that of Cameroon. This is certainly an important stage in regionalisation which in the future will facilitate the Foundation of Central Africa's becoming a Province.

Without prejudice to the work of mission, the consolidation of groups within a given region can make the Spiritan presence there more flexible and more unobtrusive. Would it not be desirable to bring together those little groups of Spiritans who are occasionally to be found scattered all over a pastoral region? The District of Senegal is a good example of this: four countries make up this District: the Superior has delegated some of his powers to "regional delegates" who are members of the District Council. Could this District provide a model for regional reorganisation?

#### 4:3.4 The Enlarged Council of Arusha

In this Enlarged General Council the actual state of affairs of the Congregation, the realities and problems of regionalisation were presented.



The objectives given at Arusha were in line with those prescribed by the Chapters of 1974 and 1980. These were: regional consolidation should be pursued, in order to satisfy the needs of formation, to get missionary initiatives under way and to enable personnel exchange to take place. Regions should continue to be examples of collaboration, of sharing without administrative structures, flexible enough to adapt to needs and changing circumstances, not imposed from on high, but fostered by the General Council. The Arusha Enlarged General Council expressed the wish that all the circumscriptions would begin to move in this direction.

#### 4:3.5 Problems and questions

It may be difficult for some circumscriptions to be effectively incorporated into a Region. This is true of Pakistan, which constitutes the only Spiritan presence in Asia; the same holds true for Cabo Verde, geographically close to Senegal but cut off by cultural difference. As we have already mentioned in Part II, Angola is tied in with Central Africa; eventually it could join Southern Africa.

Amongst other difficulties the following could be mentioned: cultural and linguistic differences; a certain nostalgia for a time when a given Province was completely self-sufficient; the desire not to sacrifice the advantages of a close relationship with the local Church or of collaboration with other Institutes, the fear of losing a measure of independence in the decision-making process of the circumscription, differences in the Formation programmes, etc.

Undoubtedly there are risks in regional consolidation, especially for the older Provinces. But equally certainly, there are advantages, as experience proves. The future of the Congregation lies in internationality, in the sharing of personnel and in that family spirit which n. 21 of the Rule puts before us. We are all members of "the same missionary family" with a shared responsibility for its projects and its priorities.

It is surely obvious that, for all the decentralised Congregations, regionalisation is the way forward. But how will this be accomplished? Will we opt for fixed, stable, juridical structures? Will we avoid the creation of overly constraining structures, as the Arusha Enlarged Council desired? Will we give the General Council the authority to organise regionalisation for all the circumscriptions? Or merely to foster and encourage this movement? Above all, what decisions will be taken with regard to formation, the nerve-center of regional collaboration, which requires some measure of centralised decision-taking? In answering these questions the Chapter will lay down the lines of approach for the next General Council.



## 4:4 NEW KINDS OF MISSION

The 1986 Chapter requested that "new forms of Mission" be one of the five areas of concentration for the Congregation during this term of office. We have devoted much thought to this subject in various editions of ID, developing with particular detail the following two aspects of contemporary Mission: Mission as communion and Mission as dialogue.

Through first appointments and by encouraging the initiatives of particular confreres, we have also tried to develop new types of ministries which seemed to us especially in line with the present-day mission of the Congregation: the urban apostolate and work among youth; work with refugees, migrants and nomads; investigation of new areas of first evangelisation, of work in the media, etc.

### 4:4.1 Mission as communion

We believe that living in communion as missionaries with others is most effectively expressed through our relations with individual Churches.

"Live your own life, but live it in communion with others", was the advice of an African bishop to one of our District Chapters.

We have encouraged our confreres to become directly involved in those activities where the pastoral projects of the various Churches are put together: priests' councils, synods, etc. In this area it is important to strike a balance between an occasionally too critical detachment and an overly invasive participation.

Generally speaking, we can say that our relations with particular Churches are good and getting better. Those bishops whom we meet in their own dioceses or during their visits to Rome often make a point of telling us so.

Occasionally we feel obliged to remind some Churches of the need to look after groups of people who have not yet heard the Gospel, of those who are poor or marginalized. The importance of the witness given by the apostolic life lived in community may also need to be recalled sometimes.

In other instances, it can be the Churches that remind us of certain needs: we are continually requested to take on new areas of evangelisation, or to accommodate people enrolled in training programmes, or to take young priests into our communities.

It can often happen that, for lack of resources, we are unable to respond to all these requests. Another frequent phenomenon is the Church founded by us which continues to regard us as being at its disposal for all sorts of ministries. The increased use of contracts should help to avoid potential conflicts here. But we must also recognize that many bishops are reluctant to enter into such contracts.

The **international character** of the Congregation and the rise of new Provinces and Foundations should aid in the growth of communion between Churches.

Communion in mission also comes into being when our missionary practice gives rise to **communities which are signs of Church as communion**. This is especially exemplified by the importance we accord to laypeople in the life of these communities:

#### **Towards a committed and involved laity**

ID 48 spoke of various ways in which Spiritans, wherever they work, put time and effort into the formation and advancement of laypeople. A great deal still remains to be done here and one still sees in our behaviour a lot of clerical attitudes.

Will we be able to embody the new look of church-as-communion even within the Congregation, as expressed in the relationship between Fathers and Brothers, and in creating new forms of association with laypeople? This is an important challenge for the Congregation and could lead to profound developments in the way we live Mission and bear witness to the Gospel.

### **4:4.2 Mission as dialogue**

For us, dialogue finds its expression in the way we come to grips with cultures which differ from our own, namely in our cultural adaptability. The same is true for the way in which we enter into contact with other religions - Islam, Hinduism, traditional religions - with other Christian denominations and with the modern world. We have tried to share our thoughts on these matters with the Congregation and we have found that, practically speaking, many difficulties in Mission are connected with a lack of dialogue.

#### **4:4.2-1 Our cultural adaptability**

From the time that they leave their own culture, all Spiritans are confronted with the problem of inculturation. Even within a culture, this

problem arises, since cultures are in ferment right now. We can never stop adapting.

Our task is to adapt to a given people; it is also our task to adapt to a given Church, the one which we serve. It will have its own approach to pastoral ministry, its own sensitivities and special gifts which we must get to know and respect, to make our own.

The first step towards inculturation is usually learning the language, the indispensable means of dialogue. Sometimes one has to learn several languages: that of the former colonial power and the local one. We see that, increasingly, young people will be familiar with several international languages. Where local tongues are concerned, it is to be regretted that sometimes a newly-arrived confrere is thrown into the work without being given the time to learn the language properly. It is often difficult to learn it properly afterwards.

Nowadays a question arises concerning the shortage of personnel and people's being recalled to their province or circumscription of origin. This means that they will have spent less time in a given appointment than formerly. This is a further obstacle to real inculturation: nor is it easy to find the proper balance in this area. It is equally true that the length of time spent in a posting is of itself no guarantee of adequate inculturation.

#### **4:4.2-2 Dialogue with traditional religions and First Evangelisation**

One cannot posit an opposition between the traditional religions and the "great religions" as if the former were bereft of importance. Indeed, more and more attention is given to traditional religion. The meeting at Chevilly in November 1991 evidenced an overall evolution in our approach to these religions. There is a concern to investigate their own values and to permit the human communities to determine their own way of accepting the Good News and of living within the Church. We should also learn from them the Good News of the journey they have been making under the guidance of the Spirit.

The participants in the Chevilly meeting devoted time to a consideration of the meaning, methods and limits of first evangelisation or the first proclamation of the Good News. They noted that groups or peoples to whom the Good News ought to be proclaimed are, for the first time, to be found not only in rural areas, but also and increasingly in urban settings. Since these groups must not be isolated or neglected, some of the Christian communities with which we are involved should regard themselves as being permanently committed to this work of first evangelisation.

#### **4:4.2-3 Dialogue with Islam and Hinduism**

This branch of dialogue was the object of consideration at the Dakar meeting in July, 1989.

A growing number of confreres are involved in the mission of dialogue with the "great" religions, such as Islam and Hinduism.

Confreres living in these circumstances often feel they are in a backwater and it is not always easy to find more members for these groups, partly because of a shortage of personnel, but sometimes also because of the difficulty of obtaining residence permits. Generally speaking, this kind of mission makes even greater demands than others, requiring a huge investment of time; one must also accept that there will be no quick dividend from the dialogue. However, we also see that in spite of the rising tide of fundamentalism and the hardening of political positions the work of our confreres is widely respected and appreciated. Eventually this will produce the Good News of improved mutual comprehension between believers.

For our own part, we have attempted to strengthen the groups of confreres working in this kind of Mission by sending young men on their first appointment to Algeria, Pakistan, Senegal and Nigeria.

#### **4:4.2-4 Dialogue with the world of today**

In like fashion, we were at pains to insist in ID no.47 of January 1991 on dialogue with the world of today. There is no situation in the world of mission where the challenges of modernity do not confront us: technology, secularisation, etc. And these are specific problems, to deal with which most of us have never had any preparation: the questions raised by bioethics, by the place of women in society, how to react to the population explosion, conservation of the environment.

Not finding unequivocal answers to these basic questions ourselves, we are liable to be hesitant in our proclamation of the faith - even to withdraw from proactive ministry. The complexity of the problems with which modern life presents us obliges us to confront the problem of continuing education in the Congregation.

#### **4:4.2-5 Ecumenism**

Our confreres attempt to practice ecumenism, each in his own way and in his own part of the world. During the course of our visitations, we



have had the opportunity to see quite specific examples of dialogue, work and prayer conducted in common with our separated brothers. The biggest difficulties seem to occur in recently-established Churches which are not much more than sects and frequently aggressive in their attitude.

To put ecumenism into practice is not easy. The example of our group in Ethiopia (Gamu-Gofa) which we want to talk about here, well illustrates the challenges to be faced in this way of practicing Mission.

The 1968 General Chapter categorically insisted on our being involved in first evangelisation; it was with this purpose in mind that the first Spiritan group arrived in Gamu-Gofa, Ethiopia in 1972. The confreres quickly found that the Orthodox Church of Ethiopia had been established in their area for more than 400 years. A meeting at the Vicariate of Jinna in 1977 gave approval to the option whereby our confreres might collaborate with the Orthodox church. They began there and then to work in close collaboration with the clergy and laity of the Orthodox Church. This collaboration took the form of a thorough investigation of the culture, language, spirituality and theology of this Church; it extended to collaboration in the formation of orthodox deacons and priests, and the setting up of catechetical programmes.

In July 1983, a document drawn up following consultation between the Congregation, the local Bishop and the Secretariat for Christian Unity gave approval for a continuation of the work in progress and for the setting up of further ecumenical projects. The practice of ecumenism at this level does not close the door to the possibility of receiving into the Catholic church people who expressly wish to be so received. Apart from this exception, collaboration even in the area of first evangelisation was encouraged, always provided that the Catholics should proclaim their own beliefs. The ultimate decision as to whether to become Orthodox or Roman was left to the individual.

Our confreres have faithfully provided sacramental, liturgical and catechetical services for the Catholics of the region. A great deal of time and efforts have been invested in the training of laypeople in pastoral and developmental activities, in the translation of Catholic catechisms into Amharic and in adapting the liturgy. They have also taught at the major seminary in Addis Ababa.

### **Difficulties**

As things turned out, these various commitments gave rise to growing tensions with the Ethiopian Bishops' Conference and with the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples. On many occasions our confreres were asked to put an end to their collaboration with the Orthodox Church. There was even talk of replacing them with another group of missionaries who would perform "more conventional missionary work". Repeatedly, our confreres had recourse to the support of the Generalate and, on each

occasion, we got in contact with the Secretariat for Christian Unity which never failed to support us.

As matters now stand, our confreres remain free to pursue their present line of work while awaiting the outcome of a meeting between the two Roman authorities to provide a solution. One must bear in mind the different approaches to ecumenism taken by the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples and the Secretariat for Unity. Here we face a wider problem: what is the best relationship between the Catholic church and its sister churches which will lead to "a more perfect communion" (*Redemptoris Missio*).

For most Spiritans practical ecumenism consists in their relationship with the various Protestant Churches. During the course of our visitations, we had the experience of being invited to common celebrations, such as those held during the Week for Church Unity. Likewise, we have met community leaders, whether pastors or laypeople, who have spoken to us of the concerns they share with us in matters of pastoral practice, of development, and of Justice and Peace. We have noted that the extremely simple lifestyle of some pastors, integrated into their own background and enjoying the support of their own communities, provides a healthy challenge for those of our missions still very dependent on outside help. The main difficulties come from the often intransigent and aggressive attitude of fundamentalist groups which steadfastly refuse to enter into any dialogue.

#### **4:4.3 New kinds of ministries**

##### **Urban ministry and youth ministry**

Increasingly, the requests for personnel which are made to us refer to the evangelisation of urban areas, especially among young people who are victims of unemployment, marginalized by society. With this in mind we have supported the Durban project, an apostolate amongst the African workers living in hostels, the creation of reception centres for young people with problems in the Congo, in Madagascar and in Europe. We have also made Auteuil a first appointment for some of our young confreres.

##### **Working with migrants, refugees and nomadic peoples**

At the beginning of our term of office, Fr. Timmermans took up the work of refugee aid in southern Africa, at the request of Imbisa. We saw this as the first step of an important new direction for the Congregation amongst the continually increasing number of displaced people. It is unfortunate that this kind of work, requiring hands-on experience, is as yet not greatly developed in the Congregation. In Europe, for example in Holland, we have encouraged initiatives towards greater involvement with migrants. In

making first appointments we have devoted particular attention to peoples who, because of their nomadic status, are not easy for local churches to reach (Maasai, Boranas).

### **Areas of first evangelisation**

First evangelisation is not a new form of mission for us, but, as was said earlier concerning dialogue, it needs to be approached in a new way and to be practiced in new areas, rural and urban. The appointment of Nigerians to Guyana, the FAC project in Madagascar, our return to Guinea, appointments to Mexico or to Amazonia: all are signs of this quest. This holds true even though the last two countries mentioned are not, in the accepted sense, areas of first evangelisation.

## **4:5 JUSTICE AND PEACE**

The General Chapter of 1986 made Justice and Peace one of the five main themes confided to the General Council. Indeed, Justice and Peace is a theme on which our Rule of Life lays particular stress also.

The General Council elaborated on this theme in the first two IDs it produced at the beginning of its term of office. In ID 42 of January 1987, "Together For the Kingdom", we recalled that Justice and Peace is an essential dimension of our Spiritan life, a criterion for choosing the work we will do. Number 43, entitled "Working with the poor, action for Justice and Peace", referred to different activities already under way in the Congregation in this area.

In March 1987 the General Council established a Justice and Peace Service with Bill Headley in charge, working with a General Councillor. In September 1988 this service, along with Spiritan Sources and Mission, became the three elements of The Spiritan Center for Research and Animation. Fr Headley's term of office ended in January 1992; he will be replaced by Fr John Skinnader in September 1992.

### **Activities of the Service**

These activities are carried out along the lines laid down in the general directives given in ID/43:



#### **4:5.1 Action for Justice and Peace**

The work of the Service has primarily consisted in helping the various circumscriptions involved in these kinds of projects, by attending their chapters and making advisory visits.

Identifying and supporting prophetic Spiritan voices has led us to intervene in particular circumstances where an emergency required it, in Ireland, Haiti, Transcanada, the United States and Brazil.

The Africa-Europe Faith and Justice Network in which Spiritans are the driving force, has begun an enquiry into western models of development and African smallholders. At the moment, this enquiry has led to practical steps being taken.

The Service is in contact with many organisation which are active in this area and it is especially ready to provide information and help to Spiritans in positions of leadership who are looking for ideas. This is done through letters to Major Superiors, participation in regional meetings, etc.

It has also put together information kits - both to assist the General Council in its deliberations for the Congregation as a whole. These have dealt with African refugees, with AIDS, with the 500th anniversary of the evangelisation of the Americas, with the responses to be made in emergencies in which confreres find themselves involved. A study has also been made from the Justice and Peace perspective of the reports on General Councilors' visitations.

#### **4:5.2 Promoting the education of Spiritans in order to get them involved in Justice and Peace issues**

The search for a basis on which to establish a suitable training programme has motivated an examination of the spirituality of Justice and Peace. It has also promoted research into ways of integrating the various aspects of Spiritan life into the framework of SRAC.

Likewise, attempts have been made to put together elements of social analysis and theological reflection to deal with the specific challenges which the confreres in the field have encountered. This was behind the participation of SRAC in the Spiritan European Month and also the two week workshop at Makurdi.

Special attention has been devoted to Spiritans in basic formation. This was done by the emphasis given in meetings of formators, by (SRAC) participation in the month of preparation for perpetual vows (Europe), or



by informal visits to houses of formation in Europe, Africa and North America. Some work has also been undertaken in the area of continuing education.

In addition to the information which it has sent out in various mailings and its contributions to other publications from the Generalate, the Justice and Peace Service launched a Spiritan Justice and Peace Bulletin in July 1991. The dissemination of information has been greatly facilitated by the updating of our equipment - FAX and telephone system - and by the compilation of a large mailing list.

#### **4:5.3 The development of suitable structures**

It has been a source of particular satisfaction to the Service to see the birth and growth of a network of co-ordinators of Justice and Peace in the Congregation.

Regional meetings of co-ordinators are regularly held in Europe (reviewing work for immigrants and refugees), in Brazil/Paraguay (violence against children, human rights for native peoples), in Central Africa, in North America (support for Haiti). There are co-ordinators at work in Nigeria, in the islands of the Indian Ocean, in Papua-New Guinea, in East Africa, Angola and in the Districts of Kilimandjaro and Zambia, etc.

The Africa Faith and Justice Network/Europe (AFJN/E) is an outstanding example of collaboration with other missionary Congregations and with Justice and Peace groups. It was founded in 1989 to compile and disseminate information on questions of justice in Africa and on European policies with regard to that continent. This was based on a similar network created in the United States in 1982 with strong Spiritan participation. There are at present 34 missionary Institutes in the network. Spiritans were among the founding members and Fr. Headley has been its President over the last three years.

In Rome the Service has worked closely with the corresponding services of other Institutes and with the Justice and Peace Commission of the Union of Superiors General. It has followed with especially close attention the critical situations in Haiti, Liberia and Zaire.

#### **Difficulties encountered**

There is always a danger that we will do a great deal of talking about Justice and Peace and never get beyond that to the kind of individual and collective conversion which action for Justice and Peace calls for.

It must also be said that most confreres are still not very well prepared by their original formation to come to grips with the complex issues involved in Justice and Peace. There is a danger of reacting with discouragement or indifference in the face of our perceived powerlessness. It is also difficult to find confreres with the necessary competence to manage the services connected with Justice and Peace or to liaise effectively with poor people.

The implications of all this for our lives can be overwhelming. Thence arises the fear of upsetting other people, or our own community, or the authorities, or even ourselves. That is why it is difficult for prophetic voices to get a hearing and why we tend to overreact to their apparently unbridled enthusiasm.

At the same time, it must be said that the language of Justice and Peace is new. There are those who speak it with ease, but it is not without cant.

### **Future possibilities - Sowing the seed**

No one can doubt that in the future the Justice and Peace dimension will be more and more constitutive. This will be as much a result of the Church's approach to what is going on in the world (see for example recent documents of the Holy See, such as *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* or *Centesimus Annus*) as of our Spiritan approach to Mission (cf. S.R.L.).

If the Generalate has had a founding role in getting Justice and Peace started, the continuation of this work will be increasingly in the hands of the network of co-ordinators working at the level of circumscriptions and Regions.

The seriousness of our commitment will depend on the extent of our investment, especially in the area of training specialists in the social sciences - economics, demography, sociology, anthropology, legislation, etc.

At the same time, the integration of Justice and Peace programmes into the courses of formation will be an indispensable prerequisite.

Regional and interregional groupings are a more efficient means of dealing with certain kinds of injustices than the former Province-District relationships. AJFN could be an example of this: It will require European provinces and African circumscriptions to work together on the same problems. The same thing will happen in working with other Institutes, both missionary and non-missionary, in Europe, Africa and North America.

## 4:6 COMMUNITY RENEWAL

The 1980 Chapter devoted particular attention to the renewal of community life and asked the General Council to promote research into the community life of the Congregation and the development of community life in the Church and in the world.

This research led to the presentation at the 1986 Chapter of a handbook of ideas for community living entitled "Living Community Life". In putting together the Rule of Life, the Chapter of 1986 gave further stimulus to our thinking on community life and it requested that the renewal of community life should constitute one of the five issues entrusted to the General Council for development.

Number 5 of *Spiritans Today* was published in 1987 and bore the title "Spiritan Community". Its objective was to present to the confreres the essence of the ideas put forward in the handbook of 1986, viewing them in the light of the new Rule of Life.

Furthermore, the General Council presented Chapter III of the Rule of Life (on Our Community Life) in the accompanying booklet published with the Rule of Life at Pentecost 1987.

How has community life evolved during our term of office? What is the present situation concerning renewal?

### 4:6.1 Apostolic religious communities

We have observed over the last six years that the Chapter of virtually every circumscription has devoted particular attention to community life. It was not primarily a question of getting the confreres living on their own into community, but rather of finding a working model of community better adapted to the conditions and the needs of our apostolic religious life. We ourselves have devoted particular attention to the text of Chapters referring to these provisions concerning community life and this could be said to have been a frequent topic of conversation with confreres during visitation.

Needless to say, most of the questions about community life and about the involvement of each person in it and its relation to his ministry have been on a very practical level. The same holds true for questions about our religious life.

It may be said that the most important developments concerning our community life have had to do with the following two points:

- A better understanding of the role of **regional communities**:

Regional communities, which were inaugurated by the 1968 Chapter have received official recognition in the Rule of Life. During that time they have grown in number - not just as a convenient solution, but because they give confreres an opportunity to resolve the tension between community life and our work, those two inseparable aspects of our Spiritan vocation. The widespread establishment of these communities clearly indicates that they answer a real need.

We have insisted that the regional communities should operate with an adequate frequency of meetings and should make provision for true sharing in prayer and discussion. When the Superior of such a community supervises the thorough preparation of these meetings they become a highly effective means of continuing education.

It may be said that the multiplication of regional communities has brought about the development of a truly Spiritan family feeling. It also happens that quite a few communities get together periodically of their own accord.

The need which Spiritans feel of getting together may spring in part from two sources: we are no longer identified, as formerly, with the local Church and now that we are mixed in with other apostolic workers we feel all the more the necessity of rediscovering our own identity. But we also observe that this wish to establish our own identity does not lead to Spiritan life's becoming closed in on itself: our confreres retain a parallel concern for building more extended communities with laypeople, diocesan priests and other religious.

We believe that the regional communities challenge us continually in our wish to live our Mission in community and that their vitality needs to be constantly evaluated by their members with the help of the Superiors. For our part, we have recommended a modicum of flexibility and variety in the setting up of these communities and, at the same time, a strong requirement that all members participate in them.

- installing **community projects**

The expression "community project" was not much used in the Congregation before the 1986 Chapter. The reality behind the phrase, however, was always there, to the extent that daily life and the sharing of responsibilities were so organized as to bring about the realisation of a work or mission project shared by the community.

What was new about this arose from the **development, execution and evaluation** of the common project being increasingly the result of participation by all the members of the community. Another new element in



this is the fact that our communities are less and less involved in merely one community work, whether it be a mission or a school: and this is so to such an extent that it has become necessary to sit down - sometimes with an agenda in one's hand - and determine what the community will do together as a community and how it will do it. Furthermore, this is accompanied by a growing realisation that a community cannot define such a project without preliminary discussion throughout the circumscription and with the local Church.

Common projects are the province of regional as well as local communities. Indeed, one could say that they have played a particularly important part in the renewal of local communities.

Even though the confreres have not always succeeded in getting a clearly defined project down on paper, the very fact of coming together to share in discussing the common ethos of the community has constituted a step forward. During our visits we often asked the question: what are the missionary objectives of your community? How do you organize yourselves so that together you can achieve these goals with the support of your fraternal and religious life in their entirety? While there remain a certain number of habits and ways of behaving one might call individualist, it is also true that, generally speaking, we Spiritans are joyfully discovering the richness to be found in common action and shared effort.

Community projects should be regularly re-evaluated in accordance with the evolution of the projects entertained by the circumscriptions themselves. We have been happy to see that dialogue at this level is indeed taking place. For example, one of the European provinces adopts the following procedure before closing a house: a statement of the advantages and disadvantages of such a closing is drawn up. Contributing to this statement are all the current and even former members of the community as well as concerned members of the local Church.

We have also noted that where a circumscription has succeeded in devising a well-founded community and missionary project, the local community is able to do the same. That is why we attribute so much importance to our presence at the various Chapters which are unique expressions of the vitality in the communities of a circumscription. One must admit that, especially in the circumscriptions of long standing, devising a project which will change the relationship with the local Church can be difficult.

One of the basic criteria to be considered when we are making first appointments is the following: has the circumscription to which we are sending a young confrere really laid down precise objectives relative to our contemporary Mission? Does this circumscription have receiving communities whose common projects will ensure a good inculturation experience (for the young confrere)? In any event, it is to be noted that the vast majority of

young Spiritans, when making a request concerning their first appointment, insist on the importance they attach to a Mission which will provide an example of truly sharing community.

The heads of local Churches are also especially sensitive to this aspect of our life: seeing the vitality of our common life, they eagerly press us to receive young priests or seminarians taking pastoral courses into our communities. More and more we experience this kind of request in the course of our visitations.

#### **4:6.2 Some aspects of our religious life in common**

##### **Sharing material goods and recreation**

Living in international communities has heightened our awareness of the different cultural approaches to the practice of poverty. We have considered it important to remind confreres during our visits that these differences should be discussed in community with a view to aligning as closely as possible the various points of view and diverse practices. We have also strongly recommended that the sharing of resources between the members of a community should be total and that any gifts received should go into the common budget.

During recent years there has been a perceptible increase in the number of health problems generally and in the number of confreres obliged to return to their home country for reasons of health. Among the reasons for this are a rising median age; an increase in the burden of work caused by the fall in the number of personnel; and the deterioration in standards of health in many of the countries where we work. We have strongly urged individual confreres and communities to ensure that each one can enjoy a certain minimum amount of relaxation and recreation necessary to preserve a healthy balance. In communities it seems that insufficient provision has been made for areas of community relaxation and times of spontaneous sharing. This indicates the importance of having comfortable community rooms, up to date libraries, etc.

##### **Prayer**

We have been impressed by the high level of prayer which the confreres share with Christian communities or with a given community of women religious. It is more difficult to evaluate the place which each one of us gives to prayer in his personal life. We observe in our own houses, as elsewhere in contemporary living, a sort of "privatisation" of the religious life in which everyone discharges his duties on his own. Nevertheless, some amongst us are unhappy that they have not found in community the support or the encouragement that they had expected in this area.

## **Human Resource Development**

As we have seen, the opportunities for development among confreres have been enhanced by the improvement in community meetings. This development has also benefitted from the high level of days of recollection and meetings organised at circumscription level. A considerable number of confreres in recent years has benefitted from various forms of continuing education and sabbaticals. However, much remains to be done in this area: taking time for reading, renewal courses available to all despite the demands of the apostolate, community meetings for the purpose of studying specific subjects determined beforehand, etc.

### **4:7 SPECIFIC COMMISSIONS RECEIVED FROM THE GENERAL CHAPTER**

In addition to the general directives of which we have just given an account, the 1986 General Chapter entrusted certain commissions to this General Council. Apart from that concerning the approval and promulgation of the Rule of Life which we preferred to speak of at the beginning of this fourth section (n. 4:1), apart from the commission concerning sharing in the Congregation (cf. other sections of the report on Solidarity, Foundations, Regionalisation, Finances, Personnel) the Chapter entrusted us with the following commissions:

- \* to conduct some research about the General Chapter - location, kind of Chapter, expenses;
- \* to study a new method of electing the Superior General and his Council;
- \* to promote the Cause of our first Founder.

In number 4:7 we wish to give an account of our discharge of these commissions.

#### **4:7.1 Research on General Chapters**

##### **A New Approach**

We spoke earlier of the survey conducted among 16 Congregations by the Office of Research and Planning. Here we will speak about our investigations concerning the General Chapters of these Congregations. They bear a resemblance to ourselves inasmuch as their membership is between 1500 and 7000, they are international missionary Institutes with decentralised administrations and they are experiencing an increase in membership from southern hemisphere countries.



One salient fact has emerged from this research: General Chapters which follow the promulgation of Constitutions are often the most difficult ones.

Some Congregations, after devoting considerable time and energy to refashioning their Constitutions, are uncertain how to proceed at a new General Chapter in the parliamentary mode whose purpose would be to produce another set of texts which will go over the same ground as the new Constitutions. On the basis of this information and of our own reflection on it, we decided that the Chapter of '92 should adopt a more inductive and pastoral approach and should devote a large amount of time to sharing and weighing together the concrete experiences of members of the Congregation.

To prepare for this new style Chapter we have been in touch with the Superiors of all the circumscriptions and asked them to submit, after consultation with their members, significant experiences which they believed could provide material for worthwhile consideration. This request was repeated after some months and from it came 188 contributions out of which the General Council selected 12 which will be presented at the Chapter.

### **Choosing the Delegates**

In the Congregations which were the object of our enquiries the proportion of Chapter delegates to the total number of members of the Institute varied from a maximum of 1 delegate for 14 members to a minimum of 1 for 114. The average was 1 for 39. For this chapter our proportion will be 1 for 48 or 1 for 42 if we count *ex officio* members.

The growth of these Congregations in the Southern Hemisphere does not seem to have affected the allocation of delegates. Nevertheless, many Institutes are holding discussions on this subject. In the course of the planning for this Chapter, at the meeting in Arusha of the Enlarged General Council, it was decided that for our part, we would weight the representation in favour of circumscriptions from the southern hemisphere at the 1992 General Chapter. We believe we have been faithful to that decision in seeking the approval of all the Superiors of circumscriptions for the allocation of delegates to this Chapter.

### **Expenses**

Financial matters always seem to be fraught with delicacy. It is a little bit difficult to assign a precise value to our enquiries on this matter. Some Congregations were not very forthcoming with information on this. Others do not assign to Chapter expenses some of the items that we do. There are considerable variations concerning travel, equipment, the number of capitulants. With some reserve, we can say that our Chapters belong on the more expensive level.



## **Preparations**

The Congregations surveyed begin preparations for their Chapter anywhere from two and a half to one and a half years prior to the Chapter and employ various methods of grassroots consultation. In beginning the preparation for our Chapter two and a half years ago and in consulting the circumscriptions about the delegates, about the choice of significant experiences and on other subjects, we have followed an approach comparable to that of these Institutes.

## **Languages**

One Congregation has simultaneous translation in four languages; five use three languages. The most common languages are English (12), French (9), Spanish (5), Italian (3) and German (1). No Congregation uses a non-European language: one is contemplating the possibility of using Japanese.

### **4:7.2 Location of the Chapter**

Of the sixteen Congregations consulted, 10 had held all their Chapters in or near Rome. Four vary the location between Europe and North America and only one, up to the time of our enquiry, had held a Chapter in a developing country.

Having consulted the Major Superiors and taken into account the numerous practical details such as ease of travel, cost, availability of equipment, etc., the General Council finally proposed at the Arusha meeting three possible locations: Rome, Chevilly and Duquesne. Rome was quickly discarded because of the cost, it being by far the most expensive. The Enlarged Council was about evenly divided between Chevilly and Duquesne when Brazil was put forward as a possible location. After further investigation, the General Council decided on Brazil. This choice highlighted recognition of the new Province of Brazil and symbolized the growing importance of the southern hemisphere in the Congregation. According to our calculations, it will be less expensive to hold the chapter at Itaici in Brazil than in either Chevilly or Duquesne.

### **4:7.3 Procedure for electing the Superior General and the Councilors**

Arising out of our enquiries among the various Congregations, we presented a document to the Enlarged General Council concerning a new procedure for the election of the Superior General and his Council. This

document got a very favourable reception at Arusha. It will be submitted to you for discussion.

Before the Chapter takes place, this election is prepared for by meetings and consultations. These are intended to establish the criteria by which the delegates ought to determine their choice and to outline the qualities of a Superior General and his Assistants.

During the Chapter small groups or committees will take up the thread of the pre capitular discussions. Then the names of possible candidates are proposed and discussed in the capitular committees and in other groups. Next come the straw votes. The discussion process is continued in the interval between the counts.

It is important that there be an atmosphere of prayer and reflection at each of these stages. There is ample time provided between the votes to ensure that the discussions are not unduly hurried. *Curricula vitae* are available on request.

The procedure for (the election of) Assistants is basically the same as that for Superior General.

#### **4:7.4 The Cause of Fr. Claude Poullart des Places**

The 1986 General Chapter asked us to conduct the research necessary for two things concerning Claude Poullart des Places: a better understanding of our own history and the advancement of his beatification.

On the 3rd of November 1988 the General Council nominated Fr. Jean Savoie as Postulator of the Cause of Fr. Poullart des Places. Having collected the writings of our Founder and the various works devoted to his life, Fr. Savoie introduced his cause on the 24th of December, 1988. The Cardinal Archbishop of Paris signed the decree opening the canonical enquiry on the 1st of October, 1989.

The Cardinal of Paris nominated two censors to examine the content of the writings and two experts to verify the completeness of the dossier. When these enquiries are completed, the dossier will be transferred from the Archdiocese of Paris to the Congregation for the Cause of Saints.

In the meantime an appeal was issued to every member of the Congregation to convey to Fr. Savoie any document or evidence which could help to promote this cause.

In 1988 the Spiritan Center at the Generalate brought out a special edition of the writings of Fr. Poullart des Places (repeat of edition no. 16 of Spiritan Notebooks of 1983).

Fr. Joseph Michel of the French Province is continuing his researches on Fr. Poullart des Places. The fruit of his research has just been published in France, under the title "*L'Influence de l'AA (association secrète de piété) sur Claude Poullart des Places*", published by Beauchesne.

#### 4:8 THE SERVICES OF THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Thus far we have given an account of the commissions received from the 1986 General Chapter. Now we wish to present some aspects of the General Administration: the support services here in Rome, publications emanating from the Generalate, international meetings organised during our term of office, first appointments which were made and some problems concerning the workings of the administration.

In its work of leadership and administration, the General Council is helped by the various Generalate Services. Only the Secretary General and the Procurator to the Holy See are explicitly mentioned by the Rule of Life (nos. 207, 210 and 211). Thus, the General Council enjoys a wide area of discretion in organising the general administration. The services in existence can be generally classified in the following three categories:

First of all, services of the Secretariat: the Secretariat strictly so called, with the Secretary General and his Associate, the Archives and the Information Service. In describing the role of the Secretary General, no. 210 of the Rule of Life ascribes to him the supervision of these two services. In 4.9 more will be said about the Information Service.

All documents of the General Administration since the time of its transfer to Rome are deposited and classified in the Archives of the Generalate. It is intended, assuming that Italian law eventually permits this, that these documents will be transferred to the Archives at Chevilly which continue to be the main archives of the Congregation.

Next there are a number of specialised services, independent of the Secretariat but working in concert with it: the Documentation Center (including the Library) which collects information about the countries where we work, about Mission, the Church, and the contemporary world; the Procuratorship to the Holy See, in which a confrere acts as intermediary in our relations with the Holy See, particularly with the Roman Congregations; the Spiritan Research and Animation Center; and the services of the General Bursarship, which consist of the Office of General Accounting and the

Procuratorship in Fribourg. The present duties of the former Planning Service have been integrated into the work of the Secretary General.

Thirdly, there are the invaluable and irreplaceable community services. These comprise the work done by the Brothers (from building maintenance to care of our cars), the Bursar and the Superior. These latter two are responsible for the smooth functioning of the community into which the members of the General Council are integrated along with the other confreres.

### SRAC

The Spiritan Research and Animation Center is a continuation of the former Center for Animation and Spiritan Studies. The objective of this latter organisation was to promote research on the **spirituality of our Founders and of the Congregation**. We wanted to broaden the objectives of the Center in adding to it **Justice and Peace** and **Mission** desks. We sought to establish a team whose activities would help the Congregation to integrate more effectively the various elements of the Spiritan vocation. This would be a spirituality with its roots in our Spiritan wellsprings but also drawing strength from our work as missionaries and our identification with the poor (Justice and Peace).

N. 4.5 has given an account of the activities of the Justice and Peace desk. N. 4.9 will present the publications of the Center. The work of the "Sources" desk (Spiritan Spirituality) is well known through its publications and its visits to the circumscriptions (retreats in Africa, Europe and North America). The Mission desk is less well known because its work has been more specifically directed to reflection on behalf of the General Council itself. Its task has been to provide the Council with up to date thinking on the theology and pastoral practice of Mission, on the world and the Church. It has provided background material for meetings such as that on Islam held at Dakar and has helped to prepare the procedures to be followed at the General Chapter.

The SRAC team directed the 1990 Spiritan month organised by the European Provinces. It has also as a team put together the various editions of Spiritan Life.

Experience has shown the benefits to be derived from this team approach within SRAC and between SRAC and the General Council. More remains to be done in specifying further the leadership roles of the various members and the possibilities of collaboration between those concerned.

### Some improvements

In order to make them more efficient, the services have been modernised. A **computer network** has been installed in the Generalate first



floor offices and in those of the General Councilors. To provide better communication with the outside world, especially with our own circumscriptions, a FAX machine has been installed and our whole telephone system completely overhauled.

For some time two **secretaries**, one anglophone and one Italian and French speaking, have been employed full time. During the runup to the Chapter a third secretary has been retained.

The **Library and the Documentation Center** have been integrated, in order to free some space and to facilitate consultation of books and documents. Classification and indexing of our holdings is proceeding. Periodicals, reduced in number from 300 to about 100, are now stored in what was formerly the Documentation Center.

### **Some questions**

The biggest **difficulty we encounter is in finding people to man our services**. Sometimes this can take an inordinately long time. For example, after the death of our first General Secretary, Fr. Noonan, it took a year to find a replacement. Eighteen months were needed to find a community Bursar. The General Council would like to be able to count on the generosity of the circumscriptions in this matter. The shortage of personnel is universal. But we are in a difficult position here at the Generalate and we depend completely on the goodwill of the circumscriptions.

No doubt there could be further rationalisation and realignment of the services. We could employ more laypeople. But a certain minimum number of confreres will always be necessary.

One major problem derives from the shortage of translators (and interpreters), both for the Generalate and for international meetings of the Congregation. We have no full-time translators and sometimes have to call on the services of confreres already fully occupied in other areas. The problem will undoubtedly ease in the future, as the international contacts of our young members increase and the number of multilingual confreres continues to grow. But the circumscriptions would be doing a great service to future General Councils if they would make long-term provision for the training of some specialists in this area of translation and in other administrative duties. Here we touch on a more widespread issue in the Congregation: the need for better planning with regard to the whole range of our needs.

In the rotation of confreres working in the services we have adopted two guiding principles: three year appointments which are renewable, but which cumulatively will not exceed 10-12 years' residence at the Generalate; and the desirability of preserving a balance of internationality and cultural diversity which reflects the Congregation.

## 4:9 PUBLICATIONS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

### **Information - Documentation: the IDs**

In addition to the Rule of Life and the Handbook Commentary on the Rule, eight I/Ds have been published during our term of office. By way of these documents, the General Council has presented its policy on certain important subjects: Justice and Peace, Formation, the Foundations, etc. The method used was inductive inasmuch as each I/D was the fruit of consultation with confreres in the field, whether by means of international meetings - as, for instance, the education meeting at Pittsburgh in '91, that on Mission and Dialogue (Dakar '89), on the Foundations (Arusha Enlarged General Council '89), or through sending a draft document to selected confreres before the compilation of a final version, as for example with the I/D on Formation. For the actual composition of an I/D we asked one or two members of the General Council or of the General Services of the Generalate to present a preliminary draft to the General Council and after discussion and modification, a definitive text was approved by the whole Council. The names of those confreres responsible for the compilation of each I/D are to be found at the end of the document. Herewith a list of the I/Ds which have appeared during our term of office:

- United in the Service of the Kingdom (Jan. 1987);
- Committed to the Poor: Action for Justice and Peace (Nov. 1987);
- Spiritan Formation Today (April 1989);
- The Foundations - A Challenge to the Congregation (Nov. 1989);
- Mission and Dialogue - Dialogue with Non-Christian Religions (Nov. 1989);
- Mission and Dialogue - Dialogue with the Modern World (Jan. 1991);
- Towards "A Committed and Responsible Laity" (SRL 18) (May 1991);
- Spiritans and Education (Jan. 1992);
- Dialogue with Traditional Religions (in preparation).

### **Spiritan Information Service and The General Bulletin**

Spiritan Information, which was inaugurated back in the '70's, has come out regularly five times a year during the course of our term of office. We have now arrived at number 90 of the series. These Information documents give news of Spiritan circumscriptions, of the activities of the General Council and of the services of the Generalate and publish the acts and decisions of the General Council. Each edition contains a list of our jubilarians, both for ordination and religious profession, as well as of our deceased members. Besides these, whenever an important event or a significant anniversary occurs in a given country, the historical background of the Spiritan presence in that country is published. Thus, Spiritan

Information has become an important source of information for the current history of the Congregation.

Because of the widening scope of the events and decisions published in the pages of *Spiritan Information*, these latter have to a large extent replaced the **General Bulletin of the Congregation**. Only one edition of the Bulletin (Vol. LVI, n. 780) has appeared during the last six years. It covers the period from 1985 to 1989 and lists in summary fashion the various acts which have impinged on the life of the Congregation, emanating from the Holy See, Dioceses, or the General Council. It contains lists of those professed, whether with temporary or perpetual vows, of ordinations, first appointments, of deceased members, of the visitations of the Superior General and the Councilors to the various circumscriptions and of the topics dealt with in the Information-Documentation series.

We believe it necessary to bring out one or two editions of the General Bulletin in the course of a six-year term of office in order to provide the essential data of the life of the Congregation and to preserve a record of it.

### **Spiritan Life**

*Spiritan Life* is the new title of the Publication from the Spiritan Research and Animation Center. It replaces the two previous publications from the Center: *Spiritan Notebooks* and *Spiritans Today*. This publication is the product of collaboration between Spiritans in the field and the members of SRAC representing the services of Justice and Peace, Mission and Spiritan Wellsprings at the Generalate. These three confreres together constitute the editorial board of the periodical. The purpose of *Spiritan Life* is to present to the confreres "a modest sampling of Spiritan life in action and of the interests of our members, both practical and theoretical". It aims to be "a means which will enable us to enhance our Spiritan identity" (*Spiritan Life*, 1, p.5). Even though it is published at the Generalate, *Spiritan Life* is not an organ of the General Council and the authors are responsible for the contents of its articles. After some preliminary efforts, the review got off to a good start and since 1989 four editions have so far appeared.

### **The Administrative Guide**

This Guide, published in 1988, is intended for the use of the Superiors of circumscriptions to assist them in the discharge of their administrative functions. It contains information about the services of the Generalate and facilitates collaboration between the administration of Spiritan circumscriptions and that of the Generalate. The interpretation of certain articles of the Spiritan Rule of Life (e.g., the three-year minimum length of first appointments, the "sub secreto" of n. 167.1) is indicated in the Guide.



## **The Official Directory**

An edition of the Official Directory (n. 36) was published in 1989. With the computerisation of the data contained in this publication, an annual updating supplement for distribution to the Superiors of circumscriptions is planned.

### **4:10 INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS**

One of the consequences of decentralisation has been the steady increase in the number of meetings and conventions, whether based on geographic proximity or on commonalty of interest. The series of international conventions which have taken place in recent years would pertain to this latter category.

#### **4:10.1 Spiritans working in an Islamic environment**

This meeting was held at Dakar in Senegal from the 17th to the 22nd of July, 1989. It was organised for those "for whom the presence of Islam constitutes a challenge in their ministry". It brought together 15 confreres from 7 countries: Algeria, Mauritania, Pakistan, Senegal, Gambia, Nigeria and Mauritius.

The purpose of this meeting was to share various experiences concerning the dialogue with Islam, to identify questions arising out of these experiences and to seek the basis of an answer to these questions.

The sharing of experience took up the first part of the meeting and was, perhaps, the most interesting part of it. There was general agreement among the participants as to the facts: Islam today evidences a tremendous vitality, a religious renewal and a missionary spirit underwritten by financial support from the wealthy Arab countries. Muslims see the growth of Christianity as a threat; dialogue at the official level remains difficult, as the Muslim leaders have little interest in pursuing it. In spite of this, dialogue proceeds in quite a few places thanks to a huge investment of patience and to the ordinary relations of everyday life.

Some participants averred that they were working in this pastoral area at the request of the local Church or of the Congregation while others said they had felt attracted to such work because of their personal convictions. All were in agreement that they were happy to be involved in it. However it was pointed out that one cannot expect results in the traditional sense from this kind of mission. It was further emphasized that the church has a long tradition of actively seeking converts, and even if that is not exactly the



case nowadays, some of the fundamentalist Christian sects still exhibit this mentality, occasionally in an aggressive manner. Indirectly, this cramps our style with regard to dialogue.

In order to pursue these deliberations, each geographic area drew up a list of its priorities in the light of the discussion that had taken place. A final document, underlining the importance of dialogue for the Mission, was approved by the participants.

#### **4:10.2 Novice Masters**

Following the 1968 Chapter, formation programmes in the Congregation underwent diversification and began to be adapted to local cultures. A meeting of Novice Masters was held at Kimmage Manor, Dublin from the 2nd to the 8th of July 1989 for the purpose of taking stock of the richness of this variety and of determining bonds of unity. Representatives in attendance were from WAF, Brazil, Trinidad, FOI, Ireland, North America, France, East Africa Province, Angola, Portugal and FAC. The Novice Masters of Poland and Nigeria were unable to attend.

The main purpose of the meeting was to exchange information and to draw useful lessons from this shared experience. Four areas of deliberation were decided on: the apostolic life in the novitiate; Spiritan spirituality; criteria for admission to the Novitiate, inculturation.

Each novitiate had the opportunity to speak of its programme and of its pedagogical approach. We have already mentioned the three "models" of novitiate which were spoken of on that occasion (cf. 3:5.2). Each Novice Master was thus able to benefit from the experience of the others and to allow for these experiences in his novitiate programme and in the pedagogy employed.

The participants found this meeting satisfactory; even if they did not get answers to all their questions, at least the questions were defined more clearly. Many suggestions were put forward for a follow-up which would provide material for the enlarged meeting of Formators in 1991 (see below).

#### **4:10.3 Spiritan Lay Associates**

Over the last 25 years several Provinces have, with the encouragement of General Chapters and General Councils, experimented with different forms of association between laypeople and the Congregation. It was now time to bring representatives of these laypeople together in order to pool their experiences and to discuss the route to be taken henceforward. This

meeting of lay associates was held at Bethel Park, Pittsburgh from the 17th of June to the 21st, 1991.

Forty seven delegates (thirty lay people and 17 Spiritans) representing seventeen circumscriptions attended. There were a further nineteen children along with their parents.

Part of the time was devoted to contributions of a theological or historical nature from experts, but by far the most important part of the meeting was the presentation made by each circumscription. A great variety was evident. No two groups had started from the same point or had the same experience. Nevertheless, the same commitment to the Spiritan charism and apostolate was a shared aspect of all these experiences.

Probably the most positive aspect of the meeting was the opportunity it provided to all the associates from the various countries to get to know one another. For the first time they were able to get an overall impression of the international dimension of the movement and to feel themselves strengthened in their vocation. The atmosphere was joyful and, given the fact that there were plenty of young people and children present, it was hardly surprising that this atmosphere was sometimes expressed in song, dance, storytelling and amateur theatricals.

Plans were drawn up to repeat these meetings, at least at a regional level, and for a newsletter which would help to preserve contacts between the groups.

#### **4:10.4 Spiritan Educators**

The first international meeting on the theme "Spiritans and Education" was held at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh from the 24th to the 28th of June 1991. The purpose of the meeting was to identify present and future needs in educational matters and to consider certain questions, such as traditional and alternative forms of education, especially for marginalised youth, the administration of our schools, the presence and role of Spiritans in educational institutions; our increasing collaboration with lay partners as well as the provision of an appropriate formation for them.

The meeting had been planned with an attendance of between 20 and 25 in mind. In fact, 98 Spiritans from 24 circumscriptions attended, together with 17 laypeople and 3 Sisters who work with Spiritans in educational programmes.

Broadly speaking, the meeting dealt with four major themes: university level education, secondary level education, informal or alternative education and the participation of laypeople in Spiritan education.

Many people were surprised to discover the extent and variety of Spiritan involvement in this form of the apostolate. This was especially true of our involvement in alternative forms of education. The final statement made reference to this diversity and also drew attention to the fact that the participants at the meeting came from 20 countries and worked with 110,000 students and 1500 teachers at all levels.

The papers presented at the meeting will be published later and further meetings will be organised at a regional level.

#### **4:10.5 Spiritan Formators**

Twenty confreres involved in Formation and a representative of the Brothers, all representing the Provinces and Foundations, came together for this meeting. It was held at SIST, Enugu, Nigeria, from the 8th to the 18th of July, 1991.

The participants dealt with the following subjects by way of lectures, group discussions and large group assemblies: formation and work among the poor; inculturation; self-sufficiency; personality integration; formation of the Brothers; prenovitiate, postulancy and first cycle studies; missionary experience component and second cycle studies. The meeting devoted consideration to the adaptation of formation to a contemporary concept of Mission and to the incorporation of basic elements of our Spiritan vocation into the total process of formation.

Certain specific themes, which are often sources of tension, were broached: sharing with the poor in a way that reflects on the living standards of our own communities; the need for inculturation into the local milieu, while remaining open to other cultures and to the international dimension; financial dependence and the quest for self-sufficiency; the disproportion between the number of Formators and the modest number of young men in formation; the need to reconcile the demands of a common formation with respect for a legitimate diversity.

Consensus was achieved on the following points: the need for a formation adapted to the requirements of the modern world and to the contemporary concept of Mission, which would preserve its Spiritan authenticity; the need to develop a general framework, based on the Rule of Life, of the various stages of formation in order to preserve a satisfactory unity throughout the Congregation; the will to practice more completely a sharing of the means, resources and personnel required for formation.

#### 4:10.6 First Evangelisation

This meeting was held at Chevilly, France from the 17th to the 23rd of November 1991 and brought together about 20 confreres working in situations of First Evangelisation. These represented English-, French- and Portuguese-speaking Africa as well as Madagascar, Mauritius, Guyana, Pakistan and Papua-New Guinea.

The meeting was intended to give confreres who often work in isolation an opportunity to share their experiences. Certain common themes emerged from this sharing: considerable preoccupation with the socio-economic conditions of these peoples, often poor, oppressed minorities; a desire to really get to know them, to share their lives, to listen to them, to respect their customs and beliefs; an awareness of the danger of becoming isolated, of the missionary's becoming too much an individual unto himself, sometimes wondering if he himself may be marginalised; arising out of that, the importance of Spiritan community and of ties with the local Church; the danger of getting trapped in a mission with too much emphasis on traditional ways and of being insufficiently open to modernisation in face of the growing mobility and urbanisation of populations.

There were lots of interesting questions, much discussion and thought devoted to such themes as: evangelisation and conversion; dialogue both with the mainstream religions and with the traditional religions and cultures; the pros and cons of development; Justice and Peace; and, above all, inculturation. The meeting led to the formulation of a number of recommendations, namely: clarification of the notion of "first evangelisation"; improved preparation for those who will be involved in this particular apostolate; the importance of first evangelisation in the new Provinces and Foundations; the need to demonstrate our concern and support for those who are engaged in this demanding apostolate.

#### 4:10.7 Meetings of task forces at Rome

The General Council has on many occasions brought together at Rome small working groups of from 3 to 6 confreres to help it in its deliberations on a number of subjects (e.g., the Brothers) or in the preparation and conduct of several international meetings (Islam, Novice Masters, Formators).



#### **4:10.8 Conclusions**

These international meetings seem to have been very beneficial, bringing together as they do confreres working in the field who have only occasional opportunities to meet their opposite numbers from different cultural backgrounds. From what some of them have told us, these meetings constitute a kind of continuing education as well as being personally enriching. They are a source of support and encouragement for those who work in isolated circumstances.

All the groups have expressed an interest in further meetings, both at the regional and the international level. Many of the participants have made further arrangements to maintain regular contact.

#### **4:10.9 Meetings of Newly-Appointed Major Superiors**

Our Council has regularly brought to Rome the newly-appointed Major Superiors at the beginning of their term of office. In all, 47 of them have come here to meet with the General Council over the last six years. These meetings have enabled us to get to know the Superiors personally, to share in their hopes and to become acquainted with the problems facing their circumscriptions. At the same time it has provided an opportunity for them to get a better idea of how the General Administration works, its springs of action and some of the administrative procedures which can make things easier for everyone.

Anywhere from 6 to 19 people have come together for these week-long meetings. The most effective were those consisting of between 6 and 10 participants. We believe that this kind of meeting should be continued regularly each year.

#### **4:11 FIRST APPOINTMENTS**

Since First Appointments are reserved to the General Council, the making of them enables the Council to appoint confreres in accordance with the needs and priorities of the Congregation.

The number of these appointments has risen from about 30 in the years '87/'90 to 44 in '91 and to 62 in '92. During the last six years a total of 221 first appointments have been made.

We have repeatedly consulted with the Superiors of circumscriptions in order to have them tell us what they would like to put before the young

confreres and what the possibilities are for their community experiences. Based on these replies - which we weigh in the light of the overall objectives of the Congregation - we have drawn up lists of tentative appointments, with the emphasis on certain more than ordinarily pressing needs.

These lists have then been sent out to those circumscriptions having young men nearing the end of formation, so as to initiate dialogue between the young men and the Superiors about the various possibilities for appointments. We ask that the requests for appointments (letters from the young men with accompanying background from the circumscription Council) should come to us in May of the year preceding their leaving to take up their appointment. This has given the General Council sufficient time to look at the requests and to be in touch with all the parties concerned. Generally speaking, we make these appointments in October for confreres who will take them up in September or October of the following year.

It has been thought advisable to introduce some modifications not provided for in the Rule: we have intimated that first appointments should be for a period of three years and that any change to be made during that period can only be effected with the consent of the General Council. We have also preferred to delay until the end of their studies the first appointment of confreres so engaged. In this regard, we have also let it be known that we would prefer confreres to take up some ministry in the years immediately succeeding consecration to the apostolate, instead of going on without a break to higher studies.

A table will be found in the appendix which shows the appointments made according to the various circumscriptions of the Congregation. Note that appointments originating in southern hemisphere countries account for 62.5% of the total, while those from the northern hemisphere total 37.5%.

The next table gives the classification by country of appointment and also indicates the various kinds of circumscriptions which we wished to help:

#### **4:11.1 Small groups and those of recent origin involved in new missionary situations**

It has been our policy to strengthen these groups whose existence is sometimes threatened. They represent an important issue for the overall Mission of the Congregation:

Algeria (3); Ethiopia Gamu-Gofa (1); Ethiopia Sidamo (2); Mexico (4); Uganda (2); Pakistan (4); Papua-New Guinea(8); Paraguay (2); Yugoslavia (1); Zambia (10): 6 at Livingstone and 4 at Solwezi; Zimbabwe (7); (appointments to Solwezi have had to be suspended because of difficulties with the local bishop).

#### 4:11.2 The older Districts

We must avoid at one and the same time filling up all the empty positions and leaving in the lurch the older Districts, which are called on to respond to numerous requests. We have asked these Districts to put before us projects which are truly representative of the future of Spiritan endeavour: first evangelisation, working with urban youth, ministry among the dispossessed, such as people living in the workers' villages in Durban, etc.

Alto Juruà (1), Amazonia (4), Bangui (7), Brazil (9), Cabo-Verde (1), Congo (10), Cameroon East (1), Gabon (7), Gambia (4), Ghana (3), Guyana (3), Kenya (2), Kilimandjaro (4), Madagascar (1), Malawi (3), Mauritius (1), Reunion (1), Senegal (11): Guinea Bissau (3); Guinea Conakry (3); Mauritania (1); Senegal (4), Sierra Leone (4), South Africa (4), Yaoundé (6), Zaire (5), Tanzania (2).

#### 4:11.3 The needs of the new Provinces and Foundations

Some appointments are made to the circumscription of origin, to meet the needs of formation and promotion, but also for mission needs within the circumscription itself. New Provinces, such as Angola, receive appointments from outside as well as some of their own first appointments.

Angola (23), of which 11 are Angolan, Brazil (1), EAP (9) of which 8 are from the EAP, FAC (2), Nigeria (25), WAF (1).

#### 4:11.4 Requests from older Provinces

Here we are speaking of a new phenomenon: some of the older Provinces have made requests for mission appointments to their own territory, for confreres originating in other circumscriptions, notably those coming from the new Provinces and the Foundations. For mission promotion work confreres who have already had some missionary experience have come to the assistance of the Provinces of France, Germany and England. Some first appointments (of this sort) have also been made, especially for work among youth. Skills thus acquired in Europe can subsequently be used in the same kind of apostolate in other countries.

Canada (1), Germany (1), England (1), Spain (1), France (2), Poland (8), Trans-Canada (1), Trinidad (2), USA-East (3).

The older Provinces, after a fashion, are themselves gradually becoming missionary circumscriptions like other ones, susceptible of receiving

international communities. In any event, while there is no question of our abandoning our traditional commitments, this is a development which challenges the Congregation as a whole. The future of the older Provinces could in part depend on the response that can be given to these new requests.

#### **4:11.5 Circumscriptions without new appointments**

If one omits the older Provinces for whom first appointments would be an exception, the list of those circumscriptions which have received no first appointments during the last 6 years is as follows:

Australia, Bagamoyo, Guadeloupe, Kwara Benue, Martinique, Puerto Rico, St. Pierre-et-Miquelon.

To this list must be added a number of circumscriptions previously mentioned which have received no more than one or two confreres and that only occasionally (Alto Juruà, Madagascar, Mauritius, Reunion).

#### **4:11.6 Some Criteria**

In addition to the criteria indicated above, our choice of a place of appointment has been based on the following considerations:

- Circumscriptions which have a well-defined missionary project;
- projects for which the whole circumscription has assumed responsibility;
- new types of mission and new areas of mission. One could say that the significant experiences chosen for the Chapter are fairly representative of the kind of works to which we are most enthusiastic about sending young Spiritans;
- works which cannot at the moment be undertaken by the local clergy;
- reference to the interests of the young confreres themselves, as expressed in their letters requesting an appointment;
- likelihood of a genuine community-based appointment;
- likelihood of the creation of international communities;
- limitation of the dispersal of confreres originating in the same circumscription. Where possible, to have at least two confreres from the same circumscription working in a given circumscription.

We are happy to recognize the great willingness of most of our young confreres to accept any given appointment when they have requested one, and the enthusiasm with which they tackle the various forms of Spiritan mission.



We have outlined our choice of criteria. On the occasion of such a Chapter as this, we consider it desirable that the Congregation, reflecting on its own missionary experiences, should further elaborate its criteria.

It sometimes appears that the circumscriptions themselves are not always fully aware of the general policies of the Congregation which would help them to choose one kind of mission appointment over another and to arouse the interest of our young men in it. Such a greater awareness would make them more open to the overall needs of the Congregation and bring about a greater degree of co-ordination between them and the general missionary objectives of the Institute.

Finally it should be noted that the increasing movement towards new kinds of ministries - the apostolate to urban youth for example - requires that we should be suitably qualified for this work if we are to perform it with competence and effectiveness. What is true for this kind of work is increasingly true for all forms of Mission.

## **4:12 LEADERSHIP ISSUES**

### **4:12.1 The Leadership of the Congregation**

Since 1968 the governance of the Congregation has been decentralised in nature. The experience of the last twenty years has underlined the importance of the two great poles of leadership: subsidiarity and sharing, which must go hand in hand with decentralisation to ensure the good order of our Institute. What has come about is the following: the principle of subsidiarity, which inclines towards decentralisation, but which if carried to extremes can lead to a certain centrifugal tendency, has been modified by the principle of interconnectedness in the form of regionalisation, free exchange and frequent communication in many forms and frequencies between Spiritan circumscriptions. The Capitular documents of 1969 ("Directives and Decisions"), of 1974 ("Directives for Leadership"), and of 1980 ("Spiritan Life") have gradually refined the form of governance of the Congregation which has finally been enshrined in our Spiritan Rule of Life.

As a result of decentralisation, the role of the Superior General and his Council is very different from what it was formerly. This is true even though the centralised organisation of the Church requires that a large part of the administrative functions still falls into our lap - decisions about leaving the Congregation, Laicisations, etc. Nowadays, leadership in the Congregation, originating in the Generalate, necessarily proceeds by way of dialogue with the Superiors of the circumscriptions and their Councils. This leadership pays due heed to the legitimate diversity and autonomy of the

circumscriptions in the management of their own affairs; but it also requires that there be a unity among us to assure the unity of the Spiritan family.

The practical consequence of this kind of leadership is that it requires the continual presence of the Superior General and his Assistants in the field. There are circumscription visitations to be made, representation to be provided at Chapters and general Assemblies, Enlarged General Councils and international Spiritan meetings to be organized, regional meetings to be attended. When we return to Rome leadership requires us to compile reports on these visits and documents dealing with the general policies of the Congregation as well as the normal correspondence between the Generalate and the circumscriptions.

The increasing demand for our presence in the field is apparent. There are meetings with individual confreres, an increasing number of meetings at the local and regional level, and at that of the whole Congregation (see above); there are the various celebrations and commemorations - centenary celebrations and jubilees. This growing need for our presence in the field sets up an ever-increasing tension with the demands for our presence in Rome: administrative duties, discussion concerning the leadership of the Congregation, the common life of the Council both in itself and with the Generalate staff, relations in Rome with other Institutes.

In the light of these experiences, the present General Council wishes to submit to the General Chapter its research so far in order to determine the best possible solutions to the difficulties we have just described.

#### **4:12.1-1      Striking a balance between the time given to circumscription visits and the time spent in Rome**

① We propose that each year the Superior General and the Council be present in Rome during three periods: this would provide a minimum of four months' attendance at the Generalate. It is to be desired that the times when these periods occur be fixed at the beginning of a term of office, after summary consultation with the Superiors and other persons in authority in the circumscriptions.

#### **4:12.1-2      Method of circumscription visitation**

##### **Visits to communities**

② Is it desirable that each confrere should be have a formal interview during a six-year period - given that the same kind of interview is also undertaken by the Superiors of circumscriptions? Without excluding these

individual visitations to the extent that they are possible, would it not be better to meet with the confreres in their local and regional communities? An example of this kind of visitation is the one conducted in the Irish Province in 1990.

### **Morale-building visitations**

During our term of office, we engaged in many visitations of this type: retreats, Chapters, various regional meetings with Superiors and other people in positions of responsibility, international Spiritan meetings. All the indications are that this kind of meeting will increase in the years to come; we look on them as a special opportunity for the General Council to help build morale in the Congregation.

### **Visits by the Superior General**

Should the Superior General systematically visit all 67 circumscriptions in the course of a six-year term? Would it be desirable to lighten the load by adopting one of the following measures:

③

- spread the visitation of all the circumscriptions over twelve years. This would allow him to devote more time to each circumscription and to make supplementary visits in order to mark special occasions.
- the other solution would be to have a Vicar General back up the Superior General so that they could alternate their visitations and their presence at the Generalate.

## **4:12.2 The Superior General and his Council**

The leadership of the Congregation as described above is effected by creating in the Institute a system of continuing intercommunication which will create communion or unity in the midst of our diversity. The 1986 Chapter thought that the same technique of arriving at consensus should characterize the method of election of the Superior General and of his Assistants. As far as possible we must avoid playing politics and elect a team which will both represent the diversity of the Congregation and work well together.

### **4:12.2-1 The election of the Superior General and his Councilors**

The new procedure will be unveiled at the beginning of the Chapter in a document which was already presented at Arusha. Basically it consists of frequent preliminary exchanges of views within groups before the election takes place. The purpose of these would be to develop a clear idea of what

is expected of the Superior General and of the people considered as likely candidates.

The same procedure would be followed for the election of the General Councilors. There would, however, be some modifications to allow the Superior General to express his views on the choice of Councilors.

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#### 4:12.2-2 The Composition of the General Council

Although the S.R.L. allows for some flexibility regarding the number of General Councilors, we believe that the number now obtaining - seven, including the General Bursar - adequately responds to our present needs.

As things stand, the Councilors divide between themselves the correspondence and other contacts with the circumscriptions. According to their own strengths and background they concentrate on particular areas of responsibility: Formation, Justice and Peace, the Foundations, etc.

- Should the division of responsibilities be further modified so as to enhance geographical and regional representation? — *reside there?*
- Or should Councilors rather be chosen for their technical competence in a given area? (*B.U. - J.P.?*)
- Should a solution somewhere between these two be adopted, reflecting the actual practice hitherto? This would involve having Councilors at the service of the Congregation as a whole, but with two of them having also special areas of expertise: the General Bursar who, because of his duties would make fewer field visits, and a Councilor for Formation who would concentrate on visitation of the houses of formation.

#### 4:12.3 The Services of the General Administration

A section of this report (4.8) is devoted to the Secretary General and to the other services of the Generalate. Here it will be enough to recall that on the same subject of teamwork, the role of the Secretary General seems to us very important, both because it ensures the co-ordination of all the services of the Generalate and because it enables them to be put at the disposal of the General Council and of the Congregation as a whole.



## CONCLUSION

At the end of our six years of service to the Congregation, we return our mandate to the General Chapter, "the supreme authority of the Congregation" (S.R.L. 212).

We wish to thank sincerely our confreres of the General Administration. Thanks to their devotion and their expertise we have been able to exercise the leadership of the Congregation and to carry out visitation of all the circumscriptions of the Congregation. In this expression of gratitude we wish also to include our lay colleagues of the Generalate and especially those who make up the General Secretariat.

Our thanks also to the many confreres who gave us such a fraternal welcome in the course of our visits and to the Congregation as a whole for the trust they placed in us during our term of office.

For each one of us these six years of service to the Congregation have been an extraordinary experience of the life of the Congregation and of the Church in so many parts of the world. It has been an enriching experience in which we have seen signs of the Spirit who is the heart of Mission working in the world, in the Church and in our missionary family. Thus, our word of thanks to you is also an expression of thanksgiving.

Our hope is that during this Chapter we may discern together the action of the Spirit in the significant experiences we are going to share with you.

Listening to these stories and making this effort at discernment, perhaps we will be able, with the members of this chapter, to pronounce a prophetic word to our Spiritan confreres whom we represent, and to all those to whom the risen Christ sends us in the continuation of his mission.

Easter, 1992.

Pierre HAAS C.S.Sp.,  
Superior General.

## **APPENDICES**

### **STATISTICS**

- I Spiritans by Circumscription of Origin
- II GRAPH - Circumscriptions of Origin
- III Spiritans by Circumscription of Appointment and by Continent
- IV GRAPH - Spiritans in the World
- V Spiritans by Circumscription of Appointment
- VI GRAPH - The Congregation APRIL 1974 - APRIL 1992
- VII Foundations and Young Provinces APRIL 1974 - APRIL 1992
- VIII Youth in Formation 1991 - 1992
- IX Table of First Appointments 1986 - 1992

# Graph I

## SPIRITANS BY CIRCUMSCRIPTION OF ORIGIN

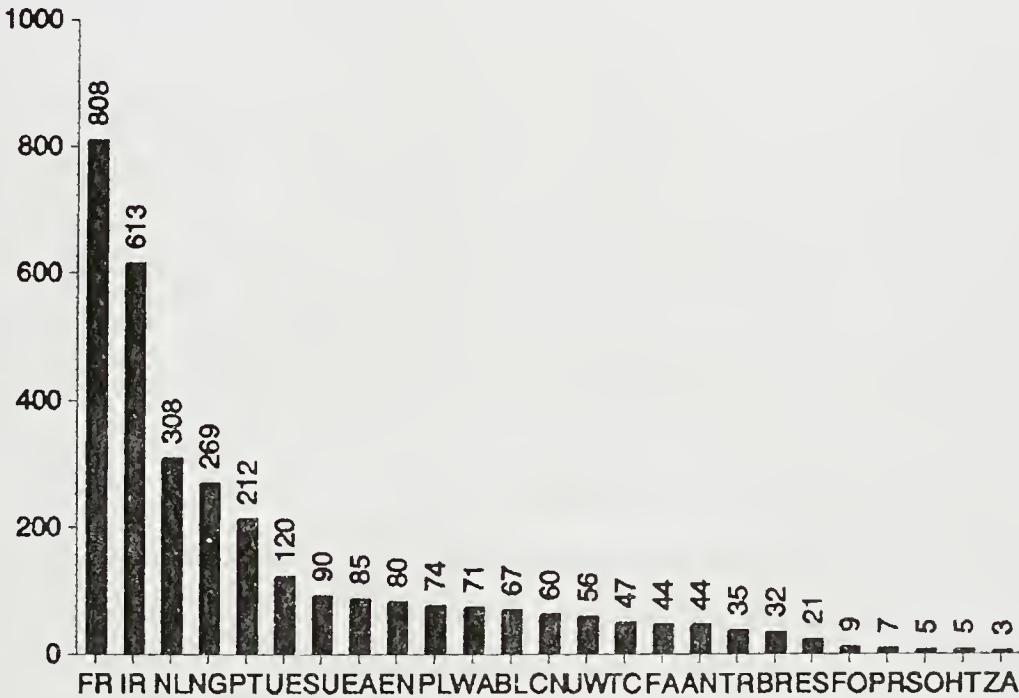
1 APRIL 1992

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Angola	(AN)	44	Nigeria	(NG)	269
Belgium	(BL)	67	Poland	(PL)	74
Brasil	(BR)	32	Porto Rico	(PR)	07
Canada	(CN)	60	Portugal	(PT)	212
Deutschland	(DL)	130	Southern Africa	(SO)	05
EAP	(EA)	85	Suisse	(SU)	90
England	(EN)	80	TransCanada	(TC)	47
Spain	(ES)	21	Trinidad	(TR)	35
FAC	(FA)	44	USA/E	(UE)	120
FOI	(FO)	09	USA/W	(UW)	56
France	(FR)	808	WAF	(WA)	71
Haiti	(HT)	05	Zaire Foundation	(ZA)	03
Ireland	(IR)	613			
Nederland	(NL)	308	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3.295</b>

# CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS OF ORIGIN

01 - APRIL - 1992





### Graph III

## SPIRITANS BY CIRCUMSCRIPTION OF APPOINTMENT AND BY CONTINENT

1 APRIL 1992

.....

### AFRICA

Algeria	06	Madagascar	39
Angola	95	Makurdi	33
Bagamoyo	12	Malawi	06
Bangui	50	Mauritius	14
Cabo Verde	16	Nigeria	246
Congo	44	Reunion	27
EAP	66	Senegal	63
E/Camerouns	20	Sierra Leone	37
Ethiopia/Gamu Gofa	08	Southern Africa	25
Ethiopia/Sidamo	04	WAF	69
FAC	30	Yaounde	65
FOI	07	Zaire	29
Gabon	47	Zaire Foundation	04
Gambia	19	Zambia/Livingstone	10
Ghana	15	Zimbabwe	12
Kenya	64		
Kilimanjaro	30		
Kwara-Benue	09	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.221</b>

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### ASIA

Pakistan	10	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>
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## AMERICA - NORTH AND CENTRAL

Canada	49	TransCanada	48
Guadeloupe	19	Trinidad	34
Haiti	14	USA/E	104
Martinique	24	USA/·Ir	73
Mexico	09	USA/W	58
Porto Rico	15		
S. Pierre et Miquelon	04	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>451</b>

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## SOUTH AMERICA

Altô Juruá	18	Brazil	42
Amazonia	22	Guyane	19
Brazil Central	32	Paraguay	11
Brazil SouthEast	11		
Brasil SouthWest	33	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>188</b>

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## EUROPE

Administ. General	29	Nederland	187
Belgium	45	Poland	58
Deutschland+Yugoslavia	82	Portugal	132
England	46	French Seminary	06
Spain	19	Suisse	49
France	450		
Ireland	300	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.403</b>

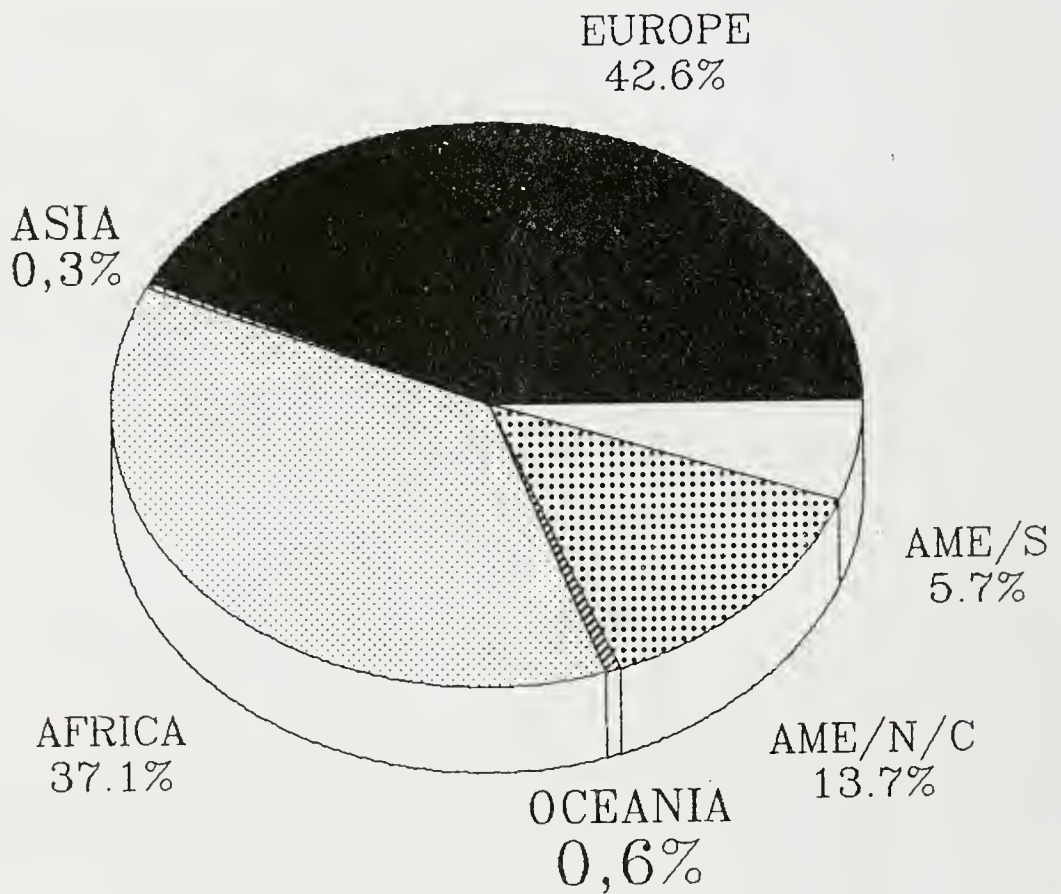
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## OCEANIA

Australia	11	Papua-N.Guinea/Kerema	02
Papua-N.Guinea/Aitape	09	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>

# SPIRITANS IN THE WORLD

## 01 - APRIL - 1992



# Graph V

## SPIRITANS BY CIRCUMSCRIPTION OF APPOINTMENT

1 APRIL 1992

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Adm. General	29	England	49
Algeria	06	Spain	19
Alto Juruá	18	E/Camerouns	20
Amazonia	22	Ethiopia/Gamu Gofa	08
Angola	95	Ethiopia/Sidamo	04
Australia	11	FAC	30
Bagamoyo	12	FOI	07
Bangui	50	France	450
Belgium	45	Gabon	47
Brazil Central	32	Gambia	19
Brasil SouthEast	11	Ghana	15
Brasil SouthWest	33	Guadeloupe	19
Brazil	42	Guyana	19
Cabo Verde	16	Haiti	14
Canada	49	Ireland	300
Congo	44	Kenya	64
Deutschland+Yugosl.	82	Kilimanjaro	30
E/África	66	Kwara Benue	09



# SPIRITANS BY CIRCUMSCRIPTION OF APPOINTMENT

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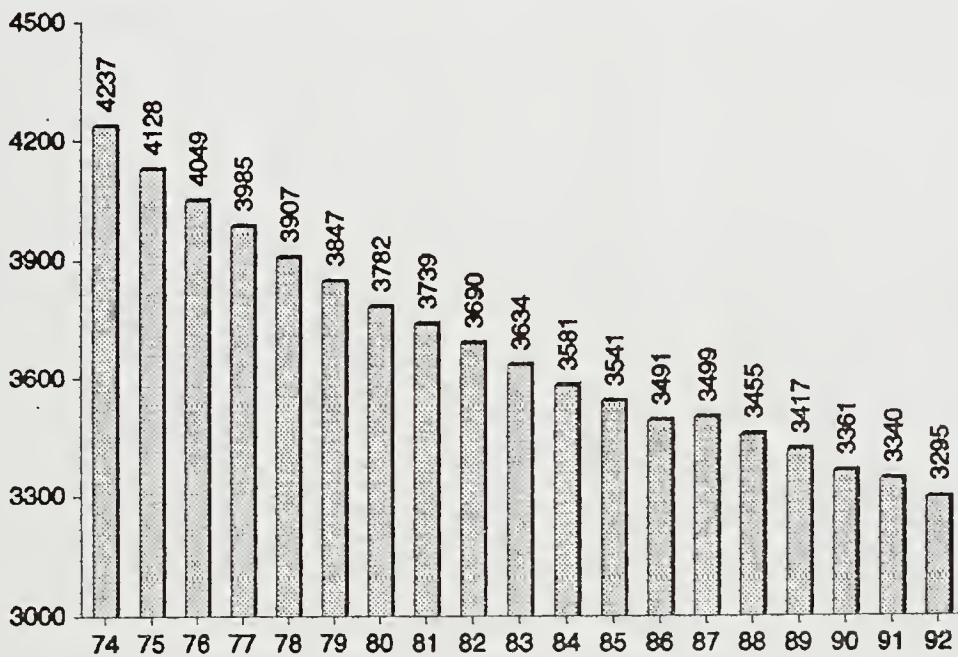
1 APRIL 1992

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Madagascar	39	Senegal	63
Makurdi	33	Sierra Leone	37
Malawi	06	Southern Africa	25
Martinique	24	S. P. et Miquelon	04
Mauritius	14	Suisse	49
Mexico	09	TransCanada	48
Nederland	187	Trinidad	34
Nigeria	246	USA/E	104
Pakistan	10	USA/IR	73
Papua N.Guinea/Aitape	09	USA/W	58
Papua N.Guinea/Kerema	02	WAF	69
Paraguay	11	Yaounde	65
Poland	58	Zaire	29
Portugal	132	Zaire Foundation	04
Porto Rico	15	Zambia/Livingstone	10
Reunion	27	Zimbabwe	12
French Seminary	06	TOTAL	3295

# THE CONGREGATION

APRIL 74 - APRIL 92



FROM 1974 to 1992: DIMINUTION: 942

Graph VII  
FOUNDATIONS AND YOUNG PROVINCES: APRIL 1974 - APRIL 1992

	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
Brazil	16	17	17	18	16	19	22
EAP	04	09	09	12	10	14	20
Nigeria	71	78	90	94	93	102	105
Angola				03	03	19	18
FAC						03	03
WAF							
Porto Rico							
S. Africa							
Zaire Found							

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
Brazil	21	21	21	22	23	24
EAP	20	24	30	42	49	47
Nigeria	122	136	144	144	153	167
Angola	20	19	21	20	21	21
FAC	05	08	10	13	13	14
WAF	01	05	11	14	18	22
Porto Rico		03	06	07	09	08
S. Africa				01	01	02
Zaire Found.						

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Brazil	24	26	26	26	31	32
EAP	54	60	69	77	82	85
Nigeria	187	207	211	230	245	269
Angola	21	26	32	35	41	44
FAC	19	27	35	39	41	44
WAF	30	33	40	46	57	71
Porto Rico	08	11	10	10	10	07
S. Africa	02	01	01	01	03	05
Zaire Found.		02	02	02	02	03

# Graph VIII

## YOUTH IN FORMATION 1991-1992

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COUNTRY	NOVIC.	I CYCLE	II CYCLE	TOTAL
Angola	06	18	18	42
Brazil	0	07	08	15
Canada	0	0	01	01
Deutschland	0	04	01	05
EAP	0	39	24	63
England	01	0	01	02
Spain	01	0	0	01
FAC	08	17	42	67
FOI	01	03	04	08
France	01	06	10	17
Haiti	01	048	052	10
Ireland	01	14	15	30
Martinique	02	0	0	02
Mexico	02	04	021	06
Nigeria	23	85	49	157
Poland	03	11	14	28
Portugal	04	12	04	20
Porto Rico	0	04	02	06
S. Africa	0	04	0	04
Suisse	0	0	02	02
Trinidad	0	04	04	08
USA/W	0	03	0	03
WAF	20	43	16	79
Zaire Foundation	01	04	02	07
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>583</b>



# Graph IX

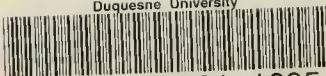
TABLE OF FIRST APPOINTMENTS: 1986 - 1992

CIRC.OF ORIGIN	NN.	CIRC. OF APPOINTMENT
Angola	14	11 Angola 01 Congo 02 Senegal (Guinea-Bissau)
Brazil	03	01 Brazil South 01 Senegal 01 Brazil (Province)
Canada	01	01 Paraguay
Deutschland	01	01 Alto Juruá
EAP	19	08 EAP 02 Kenya 02 Uganda 03 Zambia 01 Zaire 02 Tanzania 01 Kilimanjaro
England	05	01 England 02 Southern Africa 02 Kilimanjaro
Spain	04	01 Yaounde 01 Spain 01 Paraguay 01 Mexico
FAC	22	03 Congo 01 Angola 01 Algeria 03 Gabon 02 Yaounde 02 Zaire 03 Bangui 02 FAC 01 France 01 E/Camerouns 03 Senegal (Guinea-Conakry)
FOI	06	04 Papua-N. Guinea 02 Pakistan
France	16	03 Bangui 02 Angola 02 Mexico 01 Congo 02 Amazonia 02 Haiti 02 Madagascar 01 Southern Africa 02 Gabon
Ireland	10	03 Angola 01 WAF 01 EAP 01 Ethiopia 01 Gambia 01 Pakistan 01 Ghana 01 Brazil SouthEast
Nigeria	49	25 Nigeria 02 Angola 01 USA/E 06 Zimbabwe 02 Congo 04 Zambia 02 Ethiopia 03 Guyane 01 Yaounde 02 Gabon 01 Deutschland
Poland	28	08 Poland 01 Angola 02 Algeria 01 Zaire 01 Mexico 01 Congo 01 Pakistan 01 Mauritius 04 Southern Africa 01 Yaounde 02 Yugoslavia 03 Senegal 01 France (Auteuil)

TABLE OF FIRST APPOINTMENTS: 1986 - 1992

CIRC. OF ORIGIN	NN.	CIRC. OF APPOINTMENT
Portugal	07	03 Angola            01 Southern Africa 01 Cabo Verde    01 Amazonia 01 Senegal (Guinea-Bissau)
Porto Rico	04	04 Brazil
Suisse	04	02 Congo            01 Bangui 01 Yaounde
Southern Africa	01	01 Zimbabwe
TransCanada	05	04 Papua-New Guinea 01 TransCanada
Trinidad	03	02 Trinidad 01 Brazil SouthEast
USA/E	03	02 USA/E 01 Kilimanjaro
USA/W	01	01 Amazonia
WAF	14	04 Sierra Leone   03 Gambia 03 Makurdi        02 Ghana 02 Malawi
Zaire Foundation	02	01 Zaire            01 Senegal

Duquesne University



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